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The New Class and Evangelicalism: The Culture of Critical Discourse and Its Relation to Traditional Authority

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by

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VITA

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CHAPTER I

SECULARIZATION: THE CRITIQUE AND TRANSFORMATION OF RELIGION

The resurgence of Evangelicalism on the American scene as a significant "social player" has attracted a great deal of attention from popular media and academics alike. Many are astonished that the Evangelical movement is as prevalent and strong as it is in the late twentieth century. The commonplace is that religion, especially orthodox Christianity, is in decline. Modernity erodes the plausibility of religious legitimations and weakens the influence of religious symbols in the society at large. Even so, in America, one of the most modern nations, Evangelicalism boasts of a growing adherance to its brand of orthodox faith. The task facing social scientists, however, is not simply to explain the persistance and growth of Evangelicalism but to describe the nature of the religious culture in the lives and relations of its adherants. This thesis is intended as a step in that direction.

The fundamental assumption underlying the paper is that modernity deligitimates religious authority, forcing religion to adapt to its structures and culture. While the influence is by no means assumed to be one way, traditional religion is clearly the "weaker vessel" in the battle of legitimation structures. The problem is to understand more fully the interaction of tradition and modernity in the case of Evangelicalism. To that end this thesis will compare and contrast the culture of contemporary Evangelicalism with that of the New Class, which is

often presented in the sociological literature as a leading force in society for secularization. The comparison of the two divergent cultures will reveal ways in which Evangelicals adapt to the modern situation and set a path for empirical research.

The thesis is structured in three parts. First, a review of the issue of secularization as set forth in the sociological literature will be undertaken focusing on the theme of increasing rationalization in society. This is to set the theoretical context for the body of the thesis. Second, that theoretical discussion will be grounded in a review of the literature on the New Class, much of which presents that sector as a unique force for secularization in society. And third, attention will be turned to the role and current form of Evangelical culture in America, especially as it intersects with New Class cultural orientation.

Modernization and the Transformation of Religion

The nineteenth century was a time of unparalleled change in America and Europe. Social thinkers were challenged to "make sense" of the great transformation that industrialization and urbanization were bringing to pass. The advent of sociology as an independent academic discipline is tied directly to the necessity of interpreting the social formations of industrialized society. One of the most captivating issues for the early sociological thinkers was the changing role of religion. The fathers of sociological discourse addressed the changing social location of religion in their theories of social change; they sought to

understand the implications of a rapid movement away from traditional-agricultural society to a modern-urban enviroment in which the rational methods of scientific inquiry held sway rather than revelation and the clergy. Many of these nineteenth-century thinkers argued that in the face of massive social change, including the development of scientific rationality, religion was destined to disappear. The term secularization was and is used in sociological discourse to talk about the social location of relogion in the modern world and while there is (and was) much disagreement over the meaning and significance of the term, there are few thinkers who would deny that change has occurred and is in need of explanation. Meredith McGuire has pointed out that "Essentially the secularization thesis is an attempt to explain the emergence of the modern world, since many thinkers feel that modern society differs absolutely from what came before it" (McGuire 1981:215). Theories of secularization concentrate on the effect modernity has on religion and the role religion plays in the modern world.

Over the years it has been established that modernization has affected religious institutions adversely. David Martin points out that

> religious institutions are weakened by the presence of heavy industry especially where an area is homogenously proletarian; that they are adversely affected by the increasing size of urban concentrations they are corroded by geographical and social mobility (Martin 1978:83).

The culture of industrial society breeds myths of individuality and achievement by necessity; thus the religious forms of a traditional, organic society must adapt to the new situation (Martin 1978:83). In sum, social change creates new situations that religion must integrate if it is to continue to be relevant. This adaptation has been for

religious institutions in every age but the age of industry is unique in that the adaptive demands are all-encompassing in scope.

Industrialization brought with it tremendous demographic shifts away from the land and the farm to the city and the factory. Large-scale industrialization weakened "vertical bonds" of traditional authority found in the church, family and small-scale organizations(Martin 1978:87,91). Horizontal relations are expanded and are organized by and through ideologies that cut across the traditional structures of society, such as family, neighborhood and church (Gouldner 1976:23). Modern ideologies, which are in effect secular meaning systems, bind persons together who have little in common save an idea or a belief (Gouldner 1976:23). Communication and affinities are less dependent and less bounded by local traditions and authorities. The social position or authority of the speaker becomes less important for determining the truth(or power) of a speech act. This development was necessary in the emerging world where change and movement was the norm rather than the exception. Societies had to develop a way of communicating across particularistic ties of a passing age of religion and locality (Gouldner 1976:25).

Sociological discourse has been dominated to a large extent by several polar categories which attempt to come to grip with social change. Categories such as traditional and modern, Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft, organic and mechanical solidarity, status and contract, traditional authority and rational-legal forms were all attempts by various social thinkers to understand and explain the tremendous change that they were living in and through. These dichotomies were pulled together

and addressed as process with the introduction of terms such as industrialization, modernization, rationalization, bureaucratization, and urbanization; they were terms used to talk about and begin to analyze change at the societal and cultural levels, which affected economic, political and religious relations. Of all these terms, however, "industrialization became the generic term" encompassing all levels of change; today the term industrialization has largely been replaced with "modernization" (Kumar 1978:55).

From the beginning sociologists have been concerned with the effect of modernization (industrialization) on the role of religion in society. St. Simon and Comte were convinced that science and its rational method would replace religion, making the "good society" not only possible but imminent. Marx, following the critique of Feurbach, argued that religion was a human projection and therefore an illusion. But unlike Feurbach he focused on the social basis and implications of religious sentiment. Religion from Marx point of view functioned as the ideology of an alienated world and had to be critiqued as a human production (Marx 1982: 63). It was destined to be pushed aside and must necessarily be in order to make way for the rational politics of revolution. Durkheim viewed religion as the basis for relations in traditional-collective society, but that form of society was being transformed in the industrial era; the collectivity was no longer the basis for solidarity. Religion was more likely to be an individual phenomenon in modern society. Hence Durkheim wrote of the "cult of the individual" in *The Division of Labor*. Max Weber's work on religion concentrated on the relation of religion to the capitalist economy arguing that the most

significant characteristic of the modern situation was the phenomenon of increasing rationalization in all spheres of life, including the religious.

We see from this brief excursion into the early history of sociology that the subject of religion has been a consistent concern of sociologists, albeit in various ways and for various reasons. Industrial society was viewed by most to be a secular society. Institutions in all areas of society were transformed; religious instituions were declining in importance and religious beliefs were being challenged, transformed and many times replaced by the authority of science and reason (Kumar 1978:95; Gouldner 1976:24; Wilson 1985:11-12). Revealed religion no longer had the hold on Western society and culture it once did. There were challenges in every quarter. Bryan Wilson has said that the

> increasing awareness that rules were not absolute and heavensent but were amenable to changing need, and that even the most sacred norms of society could be renegotiated, and perhaps even superceded, challenged assumption about the will of higher beings in favor of the more conscious purposes of man himself (Wilson 1985:12).

In short, absolute decrees and transcendent social norms were tamed by an alternative vision that relied on the application of human reason to solve problems, explain mysteries and create the future (Wilson 1985:13). Industrial society placed man at the center of the universe rather than the gods; no longer was man simply a servant to and for the gods. According to Feurbach, Marx, Nietchze, and Durkheim, the gods were a mere reflection of man's activity in the world.

Sociology was, and is, set over against traditional ways of understanding and ordering reality. Theological ways of knowing were found to be lacking when compared to the scientific method and sociology

worked very hard to make itself a mirror image of the natural sciences (Wilson 1985:10; Gouldner 1976). Theology was found to be a social discourse among others; it was in no way unique. The claims of sacredness and transcendence were stripped of their authority in the face of the scientific rationality and the twin development of technology and science. Technology and science grew up together and the world changed radically forcing religion to adapt. One of the master terms in sociological discourse, secularization, is an attempt to give a name and explanation to the ongoing process of modernization which forced religion to a more marginal role in society. Secularization has been one of the central sociological concepts used to describe and begin to explain the situation.

Secularization: The Thesis of Decline and Persistence

The secularization thesis in sociology has produced such a wide variety of approaches over the years that at least one sociologist has suggested that it ought to be discarded as an analytic term (Martin 1965). Several others have written about the problematic nature of the concept (Berger 1967; Johnson 1979; Shiner 1967; Ellul 1975; Glasner 1977). As Benton Johnson has observed, "Few fields in the sociology of religion are as plagued with such a bewildering variety of perspectives as secularization theory" (Johnson 1979:1). Johnson goes on to assert that the problem lies not simply in an ability to "achieve consensus" on the definitional boundaries of the concept, but also on the issue of how and why secularization is occurring or even whether it is happening at all. The concept has been used to describe a range of phenomena and change, such as the Enlightenment emancipation of humans from the "shackles" of

religion, increasing rationalization, desacralization and the retreat of the religious sphere to the realm of the private (Coleman 1978:602; Shiner 1967).

The explanatory waters were muddied even further in the latter part of the 1960s as theologians jumped onto the secularization bandwagon. Secularization which once was the enemy of Catholic and Protestant theologians suddenly became "the darling" as theologians (primarily Protestant) rushed to embrace the idea (Shiner 1967). They began to view secualarization as the "realization of crucial motifs of Christianity itself" (Berger 1967:106). The best known and perhaps crassest example of this was Harvey Cox's *The Secular City* where the author proclaims a new era of unbelief and argues for the goodness of profanation. In effect Cox and many other Protestant theolog ians, dating their newfound theology back to the WW-II pastor and martyr Ditreich Bonhoeffer, coopted the secularization concept arguing that the present circumstances of the church is in "complete conformity with what the Bible tells us" (Ellul 1975:36). This ideological investment in the concept, in addition to Marxism's and existentialism's anti-religious rhetoric is what prompted David Martin (1965) to suggest the term be jettisoned from the social scientific vocabulary. Even so, it is twenty years later and the term is still in use, though not to the extent it once w as. Today, sociologists of religion speak of and search for the extent and meaning of religious revival, using such terms as resacralization (Hammond 1985) to describe and analyze the rise of new religions and the resurgence of the old.

Most sociologists who have an interest in religious change--and essentially all the theories of secularization are attempting to describe and explain religious change--still have to deal in some manner with the secularization thesis. David Martin pointed out in his 1978 work, *A General Theory of Secularization*, that there are some broad tendencies of change in modern society that have been established as inimical to traditional formations of religion (Martin 1978:3). Some of the correlations Martin cites are that heavy industry adversely affects religious institutions, that religious practice declines in proportion to urban concentration, and that the church becomes institutionally differentiated as society differentiates (i.e., sects, churches, denominations and para-church organizations). The church(es) becomes increasingly differientiated from other institutions that evolve to deal with justice, education and control over ideology (Martin 1978:3). Immediately it may be seen that religion is affected at two levels: the cultural and the institutional. It can also be seen from Martin's analysis that the key sub-concepts in the secularization literature are pluralism and privatization. In this thesis I will be centrally concerned with the ways in which pluralism and privatization affect religion at the cultural level rather than the institutional or organizational level.

The various models of the secularization thesis may be reduced to two main categories: decline and persistence. The classic or strong version argues that the sacred is irreversibly declining in modern society due to the pressure of increasing rationality, the onslaught of technology, urbanization, Enlightenment empiricism, increases in education and the spread of belief in rationality (Coleman 1978:612). This thesis is

deeply rooted in the legacy of August Comte, who assumed a linear and evolutionary view of history. Comte argued that religion and metaphysics would necessarily give way to the rational, methodical world of science and technology. This view is also indebted to the sociology of Max Weber who eloquently argued for the smothering of spirit by the "iron cage" of rationality in the context of bureaucratic capitalism and has been the dominant point of view in sociology until the past decade or so.

There are those who argue for the persistence of religion in the face of modernity, albeit in an altered form(Parsons 1963; Bellah 1964; 1970; Greeley 1972; Mol 1976; Gannon 1982). This variety of the secularization thesis readily acknowledges that religion has been affected by modernization but denies that religion no longer plays a significant role in modern social life. For Parsons (and Parsonians) society has been Christianized in that Christian ethics have been institutionalized and become part of the social structure. Religious values have been transposed into the secular realm and function as universal normative constraints (Parsons 1963). Others do not see religion playing such an abstract role in modern society. Andrew Greeley, for instance, argues that humanity's basic religious need has not changed during the time of history; the sacred merely adapts and reemerges in new forms in both old and new places (Greeley 1972). For these theorists, religion has not and will not in any forseeable future disappear; it has only been relocated (Gannon 1982; Hunter 1983:147).

There is an historical dimension to the decline-persistence debate which is significant. The fundamental trend in sociology since its

inception has been to view religion as a declining force in society at both the structural and cultural levels. The thesis of persistence did not gain a broad hearing until the past decade or so when it became evident that religions had a great deal of staying power, in some cases in a very traditional form, and sociologists began to concentrate on empirical studies of contemporary religion.

Early sociologists were likely to embrace a thesis of decline and disappearance for at least two reasons. First, classical theorists lived and wrote in the midst of a maelstrom of social and intellectual changes. Religion was an integral part of traditional social forms and was threatened by new developments. The tremendous challenges to religious authority in the social sphere, such as the rejection of hierarchical control, opened the way for modern humanist ideology to push tradition aside (Gouldner 1976:6). In the midst of the storm it was nearly impossible to discern the future form and survival of religion; what was clear was that religion was in decline as a legitimating force in society.

Second, the ability of religion to adapt had not previously been challenged in such a radical way, and given the optimism of the nineteenth century intellectual climate, many thinkers assumed religion to be passe in the new world of science and technology. Religion was successfully stigmatized as metaphysical speculation while science appeared to be the rational savior of the present and future world; in science lay the hope for future order and prosperity. The tremendous advances of technology helped boost this optimistic image of science in addition to forcing further change at the stuctural level of society. In the

positivistic world of the nineteenth century there seemed to be no limit to the possibilities nestled in the womb of science; the predominant belief was that life here on earth could be perfected by human knowledge and effort (Gouldner 1976:67). Religion appeared to be a useless appendage destined to wither as it became more separated from the life-blood of society.

As the twentieth century wore on, however, the optimistic belief that the increase in knowledge would be coupled with moral improvement was challenged by two world wars and the inability of even the most economically advanced nations to solve social problems. The rationality of science and the advance of technology has not eliminated the irrational, over which religion was said to preside. On the contrary, science and technology have forced the modern world to face the absurdity of death in new ways (the Bomb, airline crashes, chemical pollution, etc.) and yet can provide little, if any, moral guidance in the midst of these threats. Hence, religion, even in a traditional form, still has the possibility of thriving in the modern context.

The limitations of science and technical rationality have become apparent to many sociologists of religion and attention has been turned to the adaptive forms and resiliance of religion. These theorists reject the postulate that religion is declining and point to a "reemergent sacred in a secular age" in the form of fundamentalist revival and new religious movements (Hammond 1985:2). These theorists do not deny that religion has been deeply changed by the modern situation; there is a great deal of agreement among observers on this point throughout the history of sociology (Coleman 1978:628). The issue, therefore, is not

whether religion has declined or persisted for the simple reason that *both processes have occurred*. The situation of religion is not an either/or issue but a both/and issue; religion has declined and it has persisted. The social change of the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries has delimited religion's role in certain sectors of society and created a demand leading to intense activity in others. Decline is never unilateral or unilinear and persistance is never without transformation.

Salient Concepts of Secularization

There are several well-known concepts which tie theories of decline with those arguing for persistence. Three salient ones are pluralism, individual autonomy, and privatization. There is broad agreement in the literature that pluralism has increased at both the cultural and social-structural levels (Coleman 1978:628). Cultural pluralism refers to the "division of society into subsocieties with more or less distinct cultural traditions" (Hunter 1983:12). In the modern world choice has been pushed to the center and the singular world of small community has been replaced by a complex world of multiple possibilities (Bellah 1970:40; Berger 1979). Cultural pluralism is a product of industrialization and urbanization which has brought a broad spectrum of more or less distinct cultural traditions in close proximity to one another(Hunter 1983:12). The effect is that doctrinal uniformity is difficult to maintain and as a consequence the authority of religion is questioned. Pluralism at the cultural level is enmeshed in weblike relation to social structural plurality. The fundamental division that has occurred at that level is the dichotomization of public and private life. Large-scale institutions such as the state, education, labor

collectivities and health care have threatened the legitimacy of primary relations such as community, family and local meaning structures. Modern individuals and groups are constantly exposed to "variant world views" which tends to undercut the social support necessary for the maintenance of a body of beliefs (Hunter 1983:13; Berger 1979; Bell 1980:332).

In this world of multiple possibilities, world views, and authoritative claims compete resulting in the diffusion of sources of legitimacy. This creates a problem for defining boundaries, maintaining order and constructing identity (McGuire 1982:235). Legitimacy is less likely to be rooted in geographical regions of origin, ethnic language or church affiliation. Today identity and legitimacy are much more likely to be tied to career, education and lifestyle, each of which imply a high degree of mobility. The link between the individual and the society is blurred, tenuous, and often in conflict. On the one hand the individual is encouraged to be *individual* at all costs, while on the other he/she is made to conform to particular roles to preserve order in the marketplace and in society. Identity then becomes a reflection of the marketplace where individuals are encouraged to consume both in career and lifestyle for self-satisfaction and self-realization. There is little emphasis on discerning the public good (Bell 1978:72; Bellah et.al.1985). The language of religion is less and less used to address public issues; that is left to the language of science, the acadamy and the experts.

The next two concepts to be discussed, individual autonomy and privatization, are sub-categories of the concept of pluralism. Most authors also agree that the pluralism of modern society leads to the increased

autonomy of the individual (Coleman 1978:629). Daniel Bell has correctly argued that the fundamental assumption of modernity is that "the social unit of society is not the group, the guild, the tribe or the city but the person." (Bell 1978:16). The ideal in Western Civilization is the autonomous person who in becoming democratic and self-determining, would achieve freedom. Religion played no small role in thrustng the individual to the fore. The Reformation made each believer a priest thus reducing the mediating role of the institutional Church for the individual before God. This has contributed to the modern obsession with individual authenticity and the need to throw off convention. Tremendous tension is generated at this point because working in modern society nearly always involves playing a role in a bureaucratic structure. In this situation it is difficult to express individual autonomy, yet autonomy is highly valued (Bell 1978:17-19). Consequenty, individuals seek expressive outlets outside work in the form of consumption creating lifestyles which testify to autonomy.

The modern individual has alternatives, choices that must be faced at every turn; choices in regard to religion and meaning systems are no different. In Berger's terms the individual faces a plurality of plausibility structures each with a more limited social basis of legitimation. Berger argues that the cultural maps providing direction, meaning, and order in life have become more *subjective* (i.e., that is, the individual is forced to turn inward). Thus the outside world becomes more precarious and the inner world more complex (Berger 1979:19-20). The individuation of modern man is, in the words of Dobbelaere, "a structural consequence of the functional differentiation of society"

(Dobbelaere 1985:383). Religion becomes a sub-system among other sub-systems in society from which the individual must choose among other priorities such as work, family, and leisure activities.

Consequently religious authority must take account of "market" preferences and adjust creedal statements and church to personal preferance. Bellah has pointed out that "the idea that all creedal statements must receive a personal reinterpretation is widely accepted" (Bellah 1970:41). Authoritarian religion based on rigid doctrinal or moral orthodoxy is difficult to maintain in the modern context (Coleman 1978:629), especially if the religious organization is explicitly hierarchical. As Weber suggested, authority structures have moved away from tradition rooted in communal memory, ascribed status, and hierarchy to legal-rational authority which appeals to formal rules and roles (Weber 1947:328). Alvin Gouldner has argued that the legal-rational form of authority is evident in the modern mode of discourse which is clearly rule oriented in terms of justifying speech claims (Gouldner 1979:20). There is little place for justification of speech claims in terms of social position; religion consequently can no longer rely on an appeal to sacred tradition but is placed in the position of persuading the individual to accept his/her definition of the situation. John Coleman has said, "Equality before a common task and authority rooted in functional competencies are replacing accepted sacred hierarchies" (Coleman 1978:630).

Related to the idea of increasing individual autonomy is the concept of privatization. Institutionally, privatization refers to the decreasing influence of formal religious symbols and authority in the mega-in-

stitutions of the public sphere; the role of religion tends to be limited to the satisfaction of personal or subjective needs (Hunter 1983:13-14). Historically, privatization has roots in the disestablishment of the church and development of the volunteer religious organization. Primary public institutions neither maintain nor reflect the sacred cosmos in the modern world; individuals have access to a variety of religious and secular beliefs and rituals for the construction and maintenance of identity. Formal religious norms are no longer applicable in secular institutions (Luckmann 1967:85-87), unless couched in non-reli gious language, in a way and degree they were not previously in Western society. The modern State has little, if any, need for religious legitimation. Secular law and the power of force are all the modern State requires. Traditional religious norms are civilized (i.e., stripped of their particualr content) and used generically for the purposes of moral unity, but the church has no power in defining "truth" in modern society. That important role is left to knowledgeable experts in the various fields of science, both natural and human. Privatization implies the freedom of the individual to choose their system of meaning rather than having it imposed by community or kin (McGuire 1981:243). Identity is not found in the public sphere of institutions, since that sphere is dominated by role specific functional rationality, but rather in a culture of self-expression and a search for authenticity.

Those theorists who argue against a thesis of decline are usually unwilling to reduce religion to the "merely" private sphere. In some cases the significance of the private sphere is elevated by arguing that community and family still must exist and provide a meaningful context

for individuals. As long as that is the case the so-called private realm will play an important role in overall society (Gannon 1982). It is well to remember that the conception of public and private is an analytic concept, and while it does effectively make reference to particular developments in modern social life, the terms "private" and "public" should be regarded as objects of sociological inquiry and not as explanatory concepts (Dobbelaere 1985:381). The relation and role of religion in the public and private realms is an empirical issue that needs to be addressed at carefully chosen intersections of social life.

We have seen that there is basic agreement that pluralization has increased leading to greater individual autonomy and the privatization of religion. The process that underlies this thread of agreement is rationalization. Max Weber made this point most eloquently in his *Protestant Ethic*. Weber's basic argument is that social life is now organized according to criteria of formal rules leading to the domination of secular means (Weber 1958). The criteria of functional rationality are values of utility such as effectiveness, efficiency, and cost-benefit analysis (Weber 1958:24-25). The rationality of the modern system is, in Weber's words, "...fundamentally dependent on the peculiarities of modern science, especially the natural sciences based on mathematics and exact rational experiment" (Weber 1958:24). The key connection, however, was the "technical utilization of scientific knowledge" and the willingness to apply that knowledge to every sphere of life (Weber 1958:25-27).

Weber argued that the rationally organized order of modern society with its increasing specialization of roles, presents itself to the

individual as an overwhelming force (McGuire 1981:240). Substantive rationality, that is the rationality that considers ends themselves, is pushed aside in favor of the most efficient means (Kumar 1978:104-105). This argument has been pushed forward in contemporary literature by Bryan Wilson. Wilson argues that the base of power has shifted away from the supernatural authority structures of traditional religion to the secular authority of the state and related institutions. The location of decision making has shifted away from religious elites claiming supernatural "connections" and sacred authority to elites who legitimate their authority by reference to other bases of power (Wilson 1985:12). Secularization for Wilson refers to the "diminuation in the social significance of religion"; the time, energy, and resources which persons devote to super-empirical concerns has declined (Wilson 1982:149). The demands of technical criteria are more likely than religious precepts to be used in the judgement of behavior; modern persons seek matter-of-fact descriptions and explanations and demand that truth claims be made and judged apart from emotion, passion or social position (Wilson 1982:149-56). Modern social organization pushes impersonal associations to the forefront and functions on the basis of rational rules of association (roles) and procedure (laws). Industrial society is mobile and less likely to be local either in terms of relation to persons or the land. Religion, therefore, is not in a position to provide overarching structures of legitimation in society and thus belief in the transcendent, supernatural realm as a power in every day life has little bearing on public discourse.

Obviously the predominance of this form of rationality has important consequences for religion, the most significant of which is the process of disenchantment. Disenchantment, again a Weberian concept, refers to the displacement of magical and supernatural elements of thought by the drive for an explanation of the world in naturalistic terms. The key feature of the rationalization process is not so much that science successfully explains particular phenomena but the belief that all phenomena can be rationally explained (Weber 1958:139). Religion becomes one cultural system of meaning among others in a social world dominated by functional rationality with its characteristic emphasis on means rather than ends. The relevance of the supernatural claims of religion is questioned by nearly all and rejected by many. Nevertheless religion persists though there can be no doubting the transformation that has occurred with regard to the role played by religion. The authority of religion has been challenged and in many ways pushed aside by the rational methods of thought and administration embodied in science and bureaucracy. In Weber's words, "...the ultimate and most sublime values have retreated from public life" in the face of a rational ethic of self interest (Weber 1958:155; 1947:123).

In what follows we will examine the rational and secular culture of the New Class. Since religion is primarily a cultural phenomenon, we will pay special attention to the culture of the NC, though there will be an effort to "situate" the culture within structural boundaries. The next step will be a review of the culture of evangelicalism, including a brief historical excursion. Evangelical culture will also be situated in

the structural context of modern society, part of which overlaps with the NC.

CHAPTER II

THE NEW CLASS: THE CULTURE OF CRITICAL DISCOURSE

The sociological literature on the New Class (NC) is rooted in a tradition of inquiry into the role of intellectuals in Western Civilization and "the scanning of the historical skies for portents of "the new class" which will overturn the existing social order" (Bruce-Briggs 1979:15). The term has been used to describe an emerging group in society that looks as if it may vie for the reigns of power. The new locus of power is knowledge; property is still important but knowledge has become a salient characteristic in industrial society over the past one hundred years. Obviously, knowledge has always been important in society, but in modern society scientific-technical forms of knowlege are of central importance. In the post-WWII years the rapid development of the 'new middle class'(white collar employment), which has created havoc for sociologists attempting to draw class boundaries, reflects the surging importance of knowledge in production and consumption industries. The conception of the New Class as it has developed in the past fifteen years ties the structure of the class to the rise of white- collar employment, the development of welfare capitalism, the non-profit sector, the media, and the tremendous increase in the importance of higher education. In summary, a working definition of the NC is: the NC is tied to the rise of scientific and technical rationality and the

increasing importance of education for the production of experts in every field of activity. Economically the NC occupies jobs that produce, distribute, and shape knowledge. Culturally the NC are products of a secular education system that is based in the critical discourse of scientific rationality which is skeptical of all traditional religious orientations and rejects the authority of hierarchy. This definition will be explicated in the following pages.

The Concept of the New Class: A Brief History

The roots of the concept are varied and have a long history. The most recent discussion of the NC is closely tied to the idea of a "post-industrial" society (Bruce-Briggs 1979:ix) and the rise of an adversary culture to free-enterprise capitalism and the business or old money class (Gouldner 1979; Podhortz 1979; Kristol 1978). The NC is universally connected in the literature with education in one form or another; the rise of the public educational system is the institutional base from which the technocrats, scientists, and intellectuals may be mass produced to meet the needs of monopoly capitalism (Gouldner 1979:3-4). Credentials are the badge of access to the job market but the process of getting the credential is one of cultural transformation, leading in many cases to an ideology that is critical of tradition. The exact content of the class structure varies and, as with most class analysis, has been argued about extensively. Nevertheless it is clear that intellectuals and education have played a significant role in modernization, leading to the production of literature in sociology seeking to understand and label these developments.

There is a rich tradition in sociology examining and, sometimes, praising the role of the intellectual in society. St. Simon and his disciple August Comte saw the role of scientific intellectuals as the group that would reveal the lawful workings of society in much the same way Newton revealed the laws of nature. In the words of Krishan Kumar, "If the society of the future was the society of science, then the science of society, sociology, had to be considered the master guide to the future" (Kumar 1978:27). St. Simon was a modern man in that he was a *manager* as well as an intellectual; thinking was always *applied* in an attempt to improve the social order. In St. Simon's view the power of the old elites was fading and would give way to two new groups: the intellectuals and the scholars of application (Kumar 1978:34; Bruce-Briggs 1979:10). Society would be run by a three part elite of scientists, industrialists, and artists. St. Simon's categories, the intellectuals and the scholars of application, correspond to the distinction in contemporary literature between intellectuals and the intelligentsia. The intelligentsia are "the managers of the new means of production and administration"; their interests are fundamentally technical rather than intellectual, critical, and political (Gouldner 1979:48).

St. Simon and Comte were prescient in their vision of the role of knowledge in industrial society, but the optimism for its positive potential was unwarrented. The theme of social planning, which permeated their thinking, is one which dominates the literature on the NC; the assumption that intellectual progress would lead to social progress buttressed revolutionary ideology on the left as well as the capitalist

goals pushed by the old business class. It was taken for granted that technology and the application and reason to society would produce good results. The good society would be created by an educated elite applying the method of science to all areas of life.

The role of the intellectual has long been of critical import for those on the left who are concerned about identifying factors leading to revolution (Bruce-Briggs 1979:11). According to Ivan Szelenyi's 1982 article in *Theory and Society*, the first theorists to use the term 'new class' were Marxists. He mentions that Bakunin accused Marx of subjugating the proletariat to the rule of intellectuals or scholars (Szelenyi 1979:85; Bruce-Briggs 1979:11). Later, Lenin systematized the role of the intellectual in his famous tract, *What is to be Done*?, where he developed the idea of the vanguard party. The intellectuals are viewed as the knowledgeble caretakers of the revolution until the proletariat can take power; the role of the intellectual remains a subject of intense debate among Marxists today (Bruce-Briggs 1979:11). Lenin's development of the vangard party is logical given that the social analysis of Marx and his followers holds an internal tension on the issue of where the impetus for revolution comes from in the society. On the one hand, Marx attributes the historical motor of change to non-intellectuals (the proletariat) and, on the other hand, yet without Marx's intellectual theory, the historical role of the proletariat would not be part of modern concousness. Lenin's theoretical development reflects the tremendous faith placed in the role of theoretical knowledge in effecting social change. Once again the theme of the planned society comes to the fore.

In the 1930s the focus shifted away from intellectuals to bureaucrats and technocrats in the face of Stalin's excesses. This shift corresponds to the growth of the nation-state and the increasing importance of bureacracy in administering the goals of the state. The planned society was now a reality and intense debate ensued over the nature and goodness of the plan. Bureaucracy in the Stalin years was viewed by many as excessive and smothering (Szelenyi 1982:785; Bruce-Briggs 1979:14). The bureaucratic collectivism of Stalin's Russia was said to be a "new class, it is the political bureaucracy that overthrew the workers' state" and is consequently viewed as a negative and threatening force to the revolution (Bruce-Briggs 1979:15). This thesis comes to the surface again in the work of Yugoslavian Milovan Djilas published in English in 1957 titled *The New Class* (Bruce-Briggs 1979:15). The emphasis on bureaucrats and technocrats remains an interesting part of the literature on the NC since all modern states are highly bureaucratized and require technocrats to operate them. The leftists who criticized the bureaucratic reality of the modern socialist state in effect reinforced Weber's iron cage thesis of fifty years earlier. The force of rationalization takes on a life of its own pushing the workers' state aside (Bruce-Briggs 1979:15). The analysis of communist bureaucracies as examples of NC power parallels thinking in the West which was critical and fearful of the consequences of bureaucratization in all political systems (Harrington 1979:127).

In democratic America the liberals of the 20s and 30s did not feel the crisis of the European left who were beginning to face the develop-

ment of a bureacratic collectivism in Russia. The liberals in America adopted the social positivism of St. Simon and Comte; they believed in reform through education and planning informed by knowledge produced via the methods of science (Bruce-Briggs 1979:10). Scientific management is an indicator of the degree of penetration in the society of rational methods of production. The business class became dependent on information and methods, which are in the domain of the NC. Management became a profession informed by rational methods and not simply an exercise in authority based on pragmatic knowledge. James Burnham's influential revision of Marxist analysis, titled *The Managerial Revolution* (1941), is related to this development. The basic thesis was that ownership no longer coincided with control and managers would be the new ruling class since they have control over the instruments of production (Hacker 1979:156). The managerial thesis, however, has not held a great deal of attention. Most NC theorists have a more expansive view of the class structure. Other more inclusive American views see the educated class in general as the NC (Harrington 1979:128). Joseph Schumpeter, for instance, spoke of intellectuals as those who undermined capitalism from within (Bell 1979:170). Intellectuals cannot help "nibbling because they live on criticism"; nothing is sacred for them save their right to criticize. In a similar vein F.A. Hayek described the masses as being at the mercy of the intellectuals, who are the brokers of ideas. He says, "It is the intellectuals who decide what views and opinion are to reach us" (Bell 1979:171). This characterization foreshadows the neo-conservative writing of the 60s and 70s because the implication is that there is a class of occupations in the society which have the power to 'filter' the knowledge recieved by the larger society.

John Kenneth Galbraith's work in the 50s and 60s is the root of much of the contemporary writing on the NC. The affluent society of Galbraith's writing is upwardly mobile and education is the key to moving up. Poverty is out, increased income with increased education is in. The first in America to use the term (Bruce-Briggs 1979), Galbraith wrote at a time of tremendous expansion in the economy and high optimism The economy expanded in a world where competition was recovering from the War and the expansion entailed large increases in education and a rising tide of professional and technical occupations. In *The New Industrial State*, Galbraith speaks of an "educational and scientific estate" called into existence by capital's need for trained talent, yet is uncomfortable with the system" (Bruce-Briggs 1979:8). For Galbraith then, the overwhelming qualification for entry in to the NC is education (Galbraith 1958:245). This accessment is very similar to that of Schumpeter and Hayek cited above.

Galbraith's also hints at a theme that was fully developed by neoconservative observers such as Irving Kristol, Norman Podhoertz, Jeanne Kirkpatrick, and others who viewed the counter-culture movement of the 60s and the expansion of the welfare and regulatory state in the 70s as evidence of a coherent and widespread ideology which opposes business. Kristol's essays on the subject were published in book form in 1978 and titled *Two Cheers for Capitalism*, where he argues that the NC is identifiable by its dislike for business. The class consists of a "goodly proportion of those college educated people whose skills and vocations proliferate in a 'post-industrial' society" (Kristol 1978:27). The NC,

in his view, *are* the media, and they *are* the educational system. They are also the upper levels of government bureaucracy. This view is reminiscent of Hayek's argument, which suggested that intellectuals control information in society. They are the group who are trained and paid to create theoretical knowledge and disseminate opinion. They are, therefore, a power the business class must contend with.

While the boundaries of the NC are drawn at different points by some neo-conservatives, Kristol's work is representative of their viewpoint. The education system has a left-liberal slant according to this view and produces many students with critical attitudes toward the existing system of capitalism. Kristol and others object to the moralistic attitudes to politics found among intellectuals who despise bourgeois life. High levels of education are more likely to lead to an intellectualization of politics where the real is measured by the ideal (such as issues of justice and injustice in history) (Kirkpatrick 1979:34). The growth of regulatory agencies and the success of activists such as Ralph Nader is evidence of the institutional success of the "adversary culture" to capitalism. The free hand of business is limited by government regulation and the impetus for these reforms, argues Kristol, comes from the intellectuals who wield the power of the spoken and written word, and even more importantly, the power of the image and the intelligentsia who occupy jobs that depend and benefit from these politics.

There were also numerous writers on the left who wrote on the NC or some variant thereof during the 60s and 70s. Fitting the burgeoning "new middle class" into the class system of analysis has not proved easy

(Parkin 1978). More clearly germaine to this discussion is the writing of Bazelon and Harrington. Both wrote explicitly on the NC using inclusive definitions of class. Again education was the key indicator; the NC are persons who are paid to critique the work of others, to plan and administrate programs and various interests. Both Harrington and Bazelon were supportive of the student movement in the 60s' and the formation of a so-called "new politics" which was socialistic in its leaning. The 1972 nomination of McGovern was the result of the new politics and indicative of NC interest and power. The push was for equality administered by the State. Programatically these politics were manifest in the drive for income redistribution via the Welfare State. The NC, in a word, are planners. They are trained to plan and consequently they are likely to be anti-laissez-faire capitalism, which regulates life and property through competition and has less need for planners (intellectuals and intelligentsia) or the planning agency (the State) (Bruce-Briggs 1979:8). They are the hope of left politicians such as Harrington for movement toward a socialist society.

In summary, while the term NC has only a recent history, there is a long and varied interest in sociology concerning the role of the intellectual in society. The process of modernization brought increased need for trained thinkers and the accumulating surplus made it possible for intellectuals who make little direct contribution to the production system to expand and become institutionalized in universities, the government, large corporations and the communications industries. The left and the right are in fundamental agreement over the location and func-

tion of the NC in the economic structure. They agree on the importance of theoretical and technical knowledge in the economy and the society as a whole. In fact, the basis for calling the New Class a class at all rests on the changing system of production which in turn has implications for the basis of legitimation. The New Class is a force for secularity. The clergy are no longer the sole providers of legitimating symbols for authority. In fact they found their form of authority has been severely challenged by the rationality of modern science, the development of the industry and the urban milieu. The New Class are at the center of change in society; the intellectuals push secular ideologies and lobby for a planned economy and social order; the intellegentsia, through technical innovation push revolution in the system of production.

The Changing Occupational Structure

The basic point of much of the writing on the NC is that modern society is an economy dependent on various forms of knowledge or expertise. Daniel Bell, Alan Touraine, and others have coined the phrase "post-industrial society" to speak of changes at the social structural level. These changes have cultural implications and those will be discussed later. For now, however, the focus will be on the structural changes in the economy.

In general the shift in the economic sector is from a goods-producing to a service economy. A very telling statistic is that in 1940 about 25 percent of the male labor force were self-employed as farmers, artisans,

and owners of small business proprietors and by 1975 over 90 percent of the labor force were salaried and working in organizations (Bell 1980:151). The effect is a shift away from farm and industrial manufacturing jobs to professional, technical and various grades of service jobs (Bell 1973:14; Bruce-Briggs 1979:218). From 1950 to 1970 white-collar jobs grew by over 10% while blue-collar work declined by 2%; industrial jobs continue to decline steadily in the 1980s. Farm workers now represent less than 3% of the labor force, down from 40% early in the century (Bruce-Briggs 1979:218). Technical and professional jobs, usually requiring some college education, have grown rapidly in the post-War years. In the 1940s there were 3.9 million such jobs, and by 1985 it was estimated there would be well over 27 million working in this category (Bell 1979:177). An important subgroup is scientists and engineers. According to Daniel Bell the growth of scientists (both natural and social) and engineers has been three times that of the working population (Bell 1979:17). This growth comparison is indicative of a shift in the economy away from a "smokestack" base toward an economy based on information and knowledge.

Another key statistic indicating the rise of a new class is the increasing importance of education in America. There are about 3.2 million persons engaged in teaching, and of these nearly 600,000 teach in colleges and universities (Bell 1979:180). In 1950, 1.2 million students graduated from high school; in 1975 the figure had doubled to 3.1 million (Harrington 1979:128). In 1975, 31% of those who recieved a high school diploma went on to earn a college degree. As a result the

percentage of Americans between 25 and 29 years of age with a college degree nearly tripled between 1950 and 1970 (Harrington p.128). This large college-educated population is not a business class. According to a study by Ladd (1979), about 60 percent of all college graduates have jobs classified as "professional, technical and kindred" by the census bureau, while only 17 percent hold managerial or administrative jobs. Many of these college graduates moved into occupations that may be classified as "information workers" or "knowledge specialists". These categories are very broad, yet so was the explosion in the knowledge industry. A 1977 study issued by the Department of Commerce indicated that 55% of the GNP was tied to knowledge industries, up from from only 29% in 1962 (Bell 1979:177). The category ranges from data processing to creating new knowledge in society; it also includes all those who moved into expanding media industries and welfare jobs (Harrington 1979:129).

The non-profit sector was one of the fastest growing areas in the late 60s and 70s and accounts for much of the expansion in professional and technical employment (Bell 1979:178). Growth in this sector was pushed by the expansion of government services in areas such as health, education, and welfare. Bell has pointed out that as much as 35-40 percent of all employment is within the nonprofit sector. Many of these jobs are university-research-related and reflect expansion in education. A large proportion of these jobs are also in hospitals and social services. In summary, occupations that are growing the fastest are those that require credentials of some kind; in part this reflects higher requirements for the same jobs. But clearly the trend in the economy is

differentiation and specialization and much of the expansion requires technical expertise.

The shift away from a goods-producing economy has drawn a great deal of attention. Bluestone and Harrison's *The Deindustrialization of America* and Harrington's *The New American Poverty* are examples of concern over the implications of these changes. The post-industrial thesis of Bell and Touraine, and the critical theory of Habermas and Marcuse, represent concern about these developments insofar as these changes signal as ever increasing domination of technical rationality. The rise in technical rationality is both necessary to and made possible by capitalist accumulation. Technical rationality is necessary for the revolution in productive forces that must occur if profits are to increase; without the innovation brought by science and technical thinking, capitalism simply would not exist as such. Technique cannot be separated from capitalism. Hence, the intelligentsia play a revolutionary role in capitalist society in that they are paid to change the means of production which in turn affects social relations. On the other hand, the surplus generated by capitalism allows a large group of persons to derive incomes by mental rather than manual labor. The university intellectuals have played an increasingly important role in the formation of social policy and the definitions of social problems. The uniqueness of the modern society is that it is organized around knowledge that is theoretical and technical; the theoretical outlook of science is closely wedded to technology. The mark of modern society is the codification of knowledge into abstract systems of symbols that can be applied to various problems or contexts (Bell 1973:20; Gouldner 1976).

The Cultural Characteristics of the New Class

The NC is tied to a set of occupations that are steeped in symbolic productions, distribution, and application (Hunter 1980:156). Consequently they are intimately involved in the production of culture, even if unwittingly. In fact, the neo-conservatives argue that the NC controls cultural production. They occupy most positions in the media and in education (Kristol 1978:77). And if Joseph Schumpeter is correct, conservatives have cause for concern because the system of bourgeois values and political economy was born of a revolution of rationality. Schumpeter argues that the "rationalist attitude does not stop at the credentials of kings and popes, but goes on to attack private property and the whole scheme of bourgeois values" (Hacker 1979: 165-166). Sociology grew up in the midst of the challenge to traditional authority in the name of scientific and economic rationality and participated fully in the challenge to tradition. It is the challenge to traditional authority, in a variety of forms, where we can begin to understand the culture of the NC.

Prior to laying out the cultural orientation of the NC, a definition of "culture" is necessary. Culture is not used in the traditional anthropological sense as including all artifacts and patterned ways of life of a group. More narrowly, culture is the realm of symbolic expression, of which its language forms are the fundamental building blocks for any attempt to create and sustain a coherant identity at the social or personal level. Culture in this context refers to modes of discourse in society and the ways those language forms are justified or

legitimated. To know something about culture then is to know something about how and what persons know in the society. In the words of Clifford Geertz, culture is an

> historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life (Geertz 1973:89).

These patterns of meanings provide the tone and quality of life as a moral and aesthetic style. They also present a picture of the nature of reality and provide comprehensive ideas of order (Geertz 1973:127; Bell 1978:28; Berger 1967:20), however primitive or sophisticated they may be.

The work of Alvin Gouldner is important in understanding the cultural orientation of the NC. Gouldner's central concept for revealing the nature of the NC is the "culture of critical discourse"(CCD) (Gouldner 1979:28). The culture of critical discourse is a speech community in which nothing is, in principle, taboo for discussion of analysis. It is a culture of speech that requires justification. Briefly, and in the words of Gouldner, it is

> an historically evolved set of rules, a grammar of discourse which (1) is concerned to justify its assertions, but (2) whose mode of justification does not proceed by invoking authorities and (3) prefers to elicit the voluntary consent of those addressed solely on the basis of arguments adduced (Gouldner 1979:28).

Critical discourse is characterized by speech that is *relatively* more situation-free and uses explicit and articulate rules, rather than diffuse precedents or tacit features of the speech context. In short, its ideal is "one word, one meaning for everyone forever" (Gouldner

1979:28). The CCD "de-authorizes" all speech grounded in traditional authority and authorizes an elaborate code that allows speech to become "de-contextualized". Justification by reference to the speaker's societal position or authority (or to God) is not enough to support truth claims that are really important in modern society. Authority no longer rests upon inherited office, whether it be religious or politcal, but on "skill and science" (Gouldner 1979:35). The elaborated code is the result of the increasing specialization in the division of labor which requires new channels for communication crossing traditional-local boundries of family, community and ascribed status.

The work of Basil Bernstein on linguistic codes is an important part of Gouldner's theoretical outlook. The postulate that underlies Gouldner's concept of CCD is that speech forms are transmitters of culture and that they are distinguishable in their effect on "authority referring claims" (Gouldner 1979:3). Bernstein begins with the idea that there are two basic categories of speech, and they are linguistically and sociologically distinguishable (Douglas 1982:22). Bernstein's first category, the restricted code, is found in small-scale, local contexts in which speakers have access to the same fundamental assumptions and speech has the function of affirming the social order. The speech used and consequently its members are more context-dependent (Gouldner 1976:59). Symbols and metaphors are more condensed and therefore more aesthetically rich (Gouldner 1976:60; Douglas 1982:23). Restricted codes are generated in what Bernstein calls the positional family where

authority is hierarchical, status is ascribed and roles define identity more rigidly (Douglas 1982:24). The elaborated code, which is Bernstein's second speech form, allows the speaker access to alternative realities "and hence (to) have a relation to the status quo which is critical and transcendent" (Gouldner 1976:60). This is the essence of the culture of critical discourse.

What implications does the CCD speech form have for the system of patterned meanings used to orient one's experience? What is the worldview of the NC? Clearly, since the NC is rooted in the tremendous reaction against religion and tradition in the Enlightenment, its worldview is not religious in the evangelical-orthodox sense of the word. This does not mean, however, that the NC is a-religious for that would sell the culture short in regard to its potential adaptability and also ignore potential irrational components in all social forms of rationality. To the degree that religion has accommodated itself to modernity by modifying the traditional aspects of religion, such as rejecting the miracles of the New Testament, there is no reason to assume that there is no overlap between religion and the NC. The issue is what kind of religion, if any, it is. As was hinted above, there is good reason to argue that mainline religious denominations are populated with NC types; many members and leaders are well educated. And it would be expected that NC types could be comfortable in mainline Protestant churches since they have for the most part accepted the basic premises and content of modern intellectual thought. Liberal Protestants, unlike Evangelicals, have accepted and applied the historical-critical method to the content

of the Bible, and consequently have a very different basis of authority. The "protest" of the Reformers was against the authority of the Medieval Church hierarchy, among other things, and the old authority was replaced by the authority of the Scripture. Today it is precisely Scriptural authority that is undermined by modern thought since under the examination of the historical-critical method the Bible has become merely one book of religion among many others. Religion for some Liberal Protestants has been reduced to ethics for all practical purposes and the NC certainly have no quarrel with a religion of ethics. It is the supernatural element that gives them pause for thought; the supernatural is a very difficult proposition for the modern student who has been introduced to the modern phenonenon of relativity which floods the images of culture as well as intellectual thought. Authority is effectivly reduced to personal interpretation argued for and against on the basis of evidence, the most respected of which is produced by the scientific method. Evidence for the supernatural that cannot be reduced to personal faith decisions is very difficult to come by, to put the matter mildly. For this intellectual reason and a host of social structural reasons religion is limited to the ethical and the personal.

An argument could easily be made that the CCD of the NC creates the need for religion of some kind. Granted, it is not likely to be the religion of tradition (i.e., orthodox Evangelical Christianity) but if Gouldner's thesis is correct the mode of discourse found among the educated of mod ern society has an alienating dimension to it (Gouldner 1976:60). Traditional religion of the West, especially Catholicism,

makes use of symbols that are highly condensed and there fore provide access to a "vast potential of meanings, of delicacy, subtlety and diversity of cultural forms" (Gouldner 1976:60). The symbols of the CCD are more elaborated and characterized by careful editing of lexical and grammatical components; that is, it is a more self-conscious linguistic form. The positive side to the form is that it implies a desirable carefulness, self-inspection, and watchfulness not available to the restricted discourse (Gouldner 1976:60). The negative side is that the self-conscious character of speech may lead to loss of sponteneity, inhibition of the imagination, and decline of play and feeling ultimately resulting in stilted, convoluted speech. In other words, the elaborated forms of speech carry as alienative potential of the disjunction of thought from feeling, of private belief from role obligation and of theory from practice (Gouldner 1976:60). Hence the need for some form of integrating set of beliefs to make sense of the modern situation and to calm the anxiety generated by extreme individualism; it should be no surprise to find NC involved in *some forms of religion*. If traditional religion can no longer accomplish the integrative function then it is likely that secular ideologies will be available to do so. Political ideology continues to be an important secular meaning system for humanist intellectuals especially in Marxist forms which are interested in promoting and defending revolution, but also less radical forms of socialism.

Peter Berger, a noted sociologist of religion, has written on the NC worldview. Berger argues that while the NC does have a religious compo-

nent, it is a "highly secularized part of the American population" (Berger 1979:50). *Members* and even segments of the NC may be religious but as a class they are "secular". He indentifies the NC ideology as secular humanism, a label that has become promineant in recent years in conservative evangelical circles. By secular Berger means "the exclusion of transcendent or divine dimensions of reality", while "humanism" denotes a "moral compassion...for and identification with the victims of social injustice, and a conviction that man is the measure of all things and that there are no standards other than humanly created ones" (Berger 1979:50). The NC is characterized by a "moral discourse of a particularly intense quality" (Berger 1979:51). Ellul has addressed the issue as well and characterizes secular humanism as follows:

> Nothing is to be judged in relation to an absolute or a revelation or a transcendent reality. Everything is to be judged by its relation to man himself. He is both judge and criterion for judgement. In judging and making decisions he is thrown back on his own resources and the only basis on which he can bulid is his own accomplishments. He knows of no higher court of appeals and no source of pardon, for he is alone on the earth and is alone responsible for all that happens (Ellul 1975:27-28).

Ellul further suggests that this is not an intellectual position only, it is a fundamental change in the context in which the common person thinks and acts. The underlying postulate is that man is a rational being and will ultimately choose the "good" (Ellul 1975:27-28). Hence the meaning of the term humanism; the tools of science and technology are to be used to create the "good society". This type of moral discourse has deep roots in the history of the NC as was seen above.

In this sense, even though the NC is a highly secularized group, the ideology functions as a secular theology which locates moral injury,

pain and suffering in social processes and structures (Berger 1979:51). Typically, Berger argues that secular humanism supplies meaning at both the personal and institutional levels. The humanistic dimension of the NC worldview is part of a longstanding Liberal tradition in the West (Hunter 1983:108). The tendency to locate pain, suffering, and moral injury in social structures is part of a "morality of possibility" (Hunter 1983:108); that is, conditions are measured against abstract normative ideals of what life should be like (Kirkpatrick 1979). The NC populates universities, think tanks, social services, and government agencies and consequently an expanding welfare state is in their interest. The logic of locating pain, suffering and moral injury in social structures is that the state must step in and regulate those structires which cause pain. The church is not expected to be the provider of morality; on the contrary social norms and protection come from the secular state, which has the job of regulating the moral order rationally and scientifically. The politics of reform is thus an important dimension of the NC worldview. Ideology of this type is necessary in the face of increasing pluralism in living conditions which threatens meaning systems. Choices have to be made and that entails self-consciousness making the world order more precarious. With the destruction of small communities and their replacement with specialization and an increasingly complex division of labor, the society becomes highly mobile; people are thrown together with contradictory and divergent value systems (Berger 1979:52). Since WW-II, society has increasingly become a mass society with the development of mass transportation, media, and education helping relieve some of the contradictions and assimilate the divergences.

Education, which is a fundamental characteristic of the NC, provides NC members with a mode of discourse enabling them to transcend context and live in a pluralistic world of symbols (Berger 1979:53; Hunter 1980:158). In summary, the abstract character of occupations in the "knowledge industry" socializes individuals to think abstractly and critically, thus providing them with a theoretical mode of discourse necessary for coping in a secular world (Berger 1979:53). Hunter sums up the discourse of the NC in the following way: "Normative patterns of thought, behavior and lifestyle grounded in traditional...sources of authority are therefore delegitimated as a matter of course" (Hunter 1983:108). This does not result in a "lack" of authority in social relations but more in a different *basis* of authority.

The self as authority is thrust to the forefront but not in the traditional way; status is not gained in ascribed hierarchy but through the credentialing system of education. The self gains identity and legitimation based on the knowledge he or she has to offer in the marketplace. Authority based on special knowledge or expertise has always been present in society but the modern form of this authority is unique due to its social prevalence. Occupations that demand special forms of knowledge have grown rapidly and that growth has lead to interesting social developments, such as the expansion of public education and the rise of the CCD. One result of these developments is increased freedom for the individual to choose among alternatives in all areas of life from educational credentials to religious orientation, if any. With this freedom for the individual comes tremendous pressure to make the choices "work

out". The individual is no longer smothered by the grip of communal ties and expectations, but neither is he/she guided by those norms either and consequently does not benefit from the security provided in the community of hierarchy. The individual is solely responsible for moving up the ladder of success and in middle-class America, this responsibilty creates anxiety when it is discovered that "moving up" does not have meaning in and of itself (Bellah 1986:149). The self is then left to discover a way to assign meaning to achievement; this is a necessary outcome in a technical society in which rational means triumph over ends. The disenchantment of the world as Weber saw it leaves the individual caught in this web of rational means but it also generates a class capable of reproducing and pushing the technical society forward.

In summary, secular humanism is not the only alternative available to the NC, but it is characteristic of the NC. Religion has adapted to modernity in many ways. The Reformation may be viewed both as an adaption to modernity and as a series of events and movements that accelerated modernity. The rejection of the Catholic hierarchy and ultimately of the sacramental system as anything more than symbolic was a major step toward the CCD. The individual was moved to the center of the picture and made personally responsible for salvation, thus eliminating the role of the hierarchy as a mediating factor. In effect individuals are made the source of moral judgment, not tradition handed down from the "Fathers" (Bell 1979:178). Protestant religion of today is the attempt to work these values out within the framework of religion, yet for the most part the value of the individual has been disjoined from religion

and has become secular ideology of the autonomous self. Having made this point I will now explore the culture of Evangelicalism and, in the final chapter, suggest linkages and disjunctions with the NC culture.

CHAPTER III

EVANGELICALS: THE CO-EXISTENCE OF TRADITION AND MODERNITY

Evangelicals have played a long and rich historical role in Western Civilization beginning with the Reformation and including the construction of the proposed "city on the hill", which later became the United States of America. Evangelical Protestantism pushed the individual to the forefront of Western society by rejecting the historical authority of the Church and making of every individual a priest. Max Weber argued that Protestant religion was central to the development of modern capitalism by providing a rational ethos of motive which made work a sacred. The individual was called to work diligently and honestly to prove his/her calling from God thus contributing to the needs of capitalism. Weber's classic work identifies affinity between the rationalism of modern capitalism and the Protestant focus on the individual in regard to salvation. The new emphasis opened the way for a modern, secular view of the individual as autonmous and having no need for the sacred of traditional religion. American Evangelicals find themselves in a constant point of tension between their desire to embrace the fruit of modernity, which they have helped create, and the need to protect their tradition from the relentless rationalizing process.

Evangelicals: Who are They?

Historically the term Evangelical has taken on a variety of meanings in divergent cultural contexts. The Reformation meaning of the term refers to the emphasis on proclaiming the Gospel "good news" over against the Catholic emphasis on the Church's administrating the sacrament (Quebedeaux 1978:7). In the U.S. the word 'evangelical' most often refers to conservative Protestants who lay stress on personal conversion and salvation by faith in the atoning death of Christ. Evangelicalism in America is deeply grounded in the tradition of Puritanism and revivalism; these influences provide a strong sense of morality and mission and have been the basis for a significant role in shaping American culture.

For the purpose of this thesis Evangelicals are defined as those who adhere to the following doctines: (1) Belief in the authority of the Bible in all matters of faith and practice; (2) Belief in the divine nature of Christ as both fully God and fully man; (3) Belief in the necessity of professing a personal faith and in communicating that faith to others (Hunter 1983:7; Quebedeaux 1978:7). Doctrinally, Evangelicals are for the most part in agreement but vary widely in temperament and consequently see their relation to the wider culture in a variety of ways.

Max Weber's typology of ascetic Protestantism in *The Protestant Ethic* still serves reasonably well as a description of theological variation of Evangelicalism in general. Evangelicalism ranges from Luther-

anism with its confessional emphasis and Calvinism with its characteristic stress on predestination and intellect to the Holiness-Pentecostal tradition that emphasizes direct communication with God via the Holy Spirit. In between Calvinism and Holiness-Pentecostals are Baptists, Methodists, and other pietistic groups that have little interest in theology, play down the organization of the church, and stress experiential and personal conversion (Hunter 1983:7). The best typology for the American scene of Evangelicalism is found in the work of Richard Quebedeaux (1974). Quebedeaux divides Evangelical culture into four segments: Separatist Fundamentalists, Open Fundamentalists, Establishment Evangelicals, and the New Evangelicals (Quebedeaux 1974:19-29). The typology embraces the most significant developmemnt in American Evangelical history: fundamentalism. Quebedeaux has divided Fundamentalism by temperament more than doctrine. Separatist Fundamentalists are the model for the stereotypical view of Evangelicals as rural, hayseed anti-intellectuals (Hofstader 1962). This portion of Evangelical culture seeks "total separation from ungodliness--especially its manifestations in Liberalism and Evangelicalism" and, it might be added, Communism (Quebedeaux 1974:20). They are characterized by negativism; taboos are applied rigorously to external behaviors in an effort to maintain a boundary between themselves and the "world" and they use the Biblical text as a legal guide which prescribes these boundaries. The distinction between Separatists and Open Fundamentalist is made on the basis of a significant group which holds to separation from historic denominations and from the world, yet it is less vocal and extreme in posture (Quebedeaux 1974:26). Both groups have in common a Dispensationalist-

literalist view of the Bible and a conservative stance on most social and political issues. The Dispensational view of the Bible is essentially an interpretation of history. Dispensationalists divide the Bible into a rigid timetable each segment of which signifies a different relation between God and the world (Quebedeax 1974:8). The literalist reading of the Bible is evident in their interpretation of prophecy, which in their view is a series of factual statements which predict the future. The Bible becomes a repository of facts that are easily understood if one will but read and submit to the authority of the Word. The conservative stance on political and social issues follows from the need to draw tight moral boundaries around the group to fend off the rising tide of secular ideologies. It follows historically from the failure in the nineteenth century to universalize Evangelicalism in American culture.

The other two categories of Evangelicals, Establishment and New Evangelicals, are historically more recent formations. Establishment Evangelicalism was formed in the 1940s when a group of young theologians reacted against the radical separatism of Fundamentalism. They formed the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) and in doing so attempted to move Evangelicalism as a movement back toward the center again. An original intent of the NAE was to provide a launching pad from which Evangelicals could retake the historic denominations from liberalism by persuasion from within rather than criticism from without (Quebedeaux 1974:32). This goal has obviously not been fulfilled; that is not significant however. The important point is that this motive directly

opposes the principles of Fundamentalism and involves quite a different strategy for relating to other Christians and the world. A basic part of this strategy is the production of respectable scholarship to be used in arguing their position. They, like the NC, have placed a great deal of faith in the power of reason to prove their claims of truth. Publishing houses of mainline Evangelicalism pour forth a continual flood of books arguing for the 'reasonableness' of the Evangelical faith. These Evangelicals are still very committed to the inspiration and authority of the Bible, but there is some diversity within the ranks on the exact meaning of these committments, and many of the books written on apologetics address the issue of the historicity of the Biblical record (their conclusion is that the record is indeed reliable). In sum, Establishment Evangelicalism is committed to preserving orthodoxy as they see it but they are not as fearful about the process as Fundamentalists. They are much more willing to participate in the wider culture of society and to communicate with other Christians notwithstanding differences. They are the largest segment of Evangelicals and, therefore, harbor internal diversity in regard to their politics and stands on social issues that would reflect the diversity of much of middle class America. Their strength is their organizational base, which includes tens of accredited colleges and training institutions, and they are learning to mobilize that strength causing many sleepless nights for liberal politicians.

The final group in Quebedeaux's typology is the New Evangelicals, which he characterizes as breaking from other segments of Evangelicals

in theology, social views, and ecumenical dialogue (Quebedeaux 1974:38-39). The New Evangelicals acknowledge that the Bible is the word of *man* as well as the Word of *God* and consequently bears the mark of cultural conditioning; they have accepted at least some of the historical-critical conclusions of Liberals while at the same time holding to the revelatory nature of the Bible. This is a significant departure from the rest of Evangelicalism and this view goes hand in hand with their rejection of Dispensationalism and its apocalyptic predictions based on a literalist interpretation of prophecy (Quebedeaux 1974:38). The rejection of apocalypse as envisioned by Fundamentalists and many Establishment Evangelicals opens the way to a less pessimistic vision of present society and their view of the role of the Christian is more liberal and in many cases leftist in orientation. They are willing to speak the language of *social* righteousness as well as *individual* righteousness, which also departs from traditional Evangelicalism; New Evangelicals are seeking a rediscovery of the radicalism they believe is inherant in authentic Christian faith. For this they look not only to the early Reformers but also to a rich history of American Evangelical reform movements in the 1800s. They are very willing to criticize Establishment Evangelicals for their bourgeois identification with the status quo (Quebedeaux 1974:39). To that end they have much in common with mainline Protestantism and willingly establish links of dialogue and cooperation for the accomplishment of common interests, especially in regard to social action. They also are the segment of Evangelicals most closely connected to the culture of the NC; this point will be developed in a later section.

Demographic characteristics of Evangelicals depend a great deal on the operational definition employed. The more conservative and strict the definition, especially in regard to biblical literalism (or inerrancy), the less educated, more southern, rural, older, and more female the population appears to be (Rotherberg et.al. 1984:17; Hunter 1983:58-60). If, however, one employs a definition less demanding in terms of biblical inerrancy, Evangelicals begin to look much more like the population as a whole (Rotherberg et.al. 1984:17). For the purpose of this paper we need only note the divergence in the literature, the problem of operationalizing Evangelicalism, and the effects of definitional strategies on demographic characteristics. The important demographic characteristic to be noted is that there is a solid middle class element in Evangelicalism and that like the rest of the population it has become more urban and educated inthe past twenty or thirty years.

The focus of this thesis is an exploration of the New Class (NC) and its relation to Evangelicalism; the nature of the NC as it was out in the previous chapter has obvious connections to the New Evangelicals. Exactly what the New Evangelicals look like demographically is not clear but there is some evidence that they are young and college educated (Hunter 1980,1983; Quebedeaux 1974). The relation of the NC to Establishment Evangelicals is more likely to be an adversarial one due to their commitment to preserving orthodox Evangelicalism and the ties between their Evangelical values and the values of the wider society. Yet the presence of an adversary stance is nearly always an indicator of influence and transformation and not simply irrational fears. For these

reasons I will concentrate on the Establishment and New Evangelical segments of the culture, leaving Fundamenatalism in the background.

Evangelicals: A Brief History

Evangelicalism has played a major role in the history of America. The vision of Evangelical religion provided ideological ammunition to fight the War of Independence, to form frontier communities, and most importantly to support a democracy. The great revivals promoted by Evangelicals left in their wake a plethora of organizations, newspapers, hospitals, churchs and reform movements (Hammond 1985:54). The early and mid-19th century was a period of optimism and enthusiasm among Evangelicals. In the midst of revivals, church growth, and the general success of the nation, the feeling of "manifest destiny" and the conviction of the special role of America in God's plan were still commonly held. The latter part of the century witnessed a bloody Civil War, the invasion of masses of immigrants with diverse cultural roots and, intellectually, the rise of Darwin's science and the arrival of literary critical thinking from the Continent both of which were serious threats to Evangelical thought (Hunter 1983:31; Marsden 1980). The arrival of the historical-critical method was especially unnerving since it cut at the very base of the Evangelical worldview: the authority of the Bible. The new ways of thinking eventually won the day and Evangelicals were forced out of the educational institutions such as Harvard, Yale, and Colgate they had given birth to. Evangelicals built a parallel set of training schools to educate their children and provide pastors for their

churches. They also chose to leave or were forced out of mainline denominations as the influence of the Social Gospel and liberalism increased; they built their own churches and formed new denominations (Hudson 1972; Hunter 1983; Marsden 1980).

The battle between Evangelicals and modernists raged on through the first part of the 20th century. By World War I strict conservatives had all but disappeared from the older seminaries (Marsden 1980:105). The infam ous "Monkey Trial" in 1925 was a public embarrasment to conservative Protestantism and symbolically signalled defeat of any hope cultural hegemony. Conservative Protestantism had lost its hold on American culture and it went underground to regroup and maintain their cultural system (Carpenter 1984:6; Hunter 1983). The 1930s was a time for protective retrenchment using already existing radio networks, religious magazines, missionary agencies, Bible conference grounds, and training schools to promote their view of culture among themselves and their children (Carpenter 1984:6; Hunter 1983:34-35). This institutional envelope protected their "plausibility structure" (Berger 1969) from a hostile environment of modernity.

What exactly was the "hostile environment of modernity?". For the purpose of this thesis modernity refers to a cognitive more than a material change, although an interrelation is assumed and developed to some degree. The material environment changed radically and rapidly in the post-Civil War years. Technology and the economy grew rapidly; the period saw the advent of the telegraph, steamship, railroad, electric lights and many time and labor saving inventions. Industrialization

offered hope as well as problems and Evangelicals found themselves in the middle of the transformation wanting to cheer for progress and yet fearing the change and abhorring the moral results of modernity. In the latter part of the 19th and early 20th century, America was rapidly changing from a rural/agricultural society to an urban/industrial and pluralistic one. Evangelicals moved to the city as well and established churches, missions, and training schools. In many ways their strong committment to evangelization made them adaptable to an urban environment because they were constantly searching for effective ways to make the gospel message heard. Efforts at urban revivalism had a long history in America, even at the turn of the century; Whitefield preached in colonial cities and Finney planted the roots of modern urban revivalsim in the 1830s. Through revivalism, Evangelicalism was able to take root in the growing cities of America, but not without significant conflict and adaptation (Hunter 1983:27-30). In this regard Evangelicals are very modern; they used the most up to date technical methods for spreading the message (Marsden 1984).

Cognitive pressure on Evangelicals and their worldview intensified with each passing decade of the post-Civil War era. The advent of Darwinist theory brought a storm of controversy. The theory of Darwin could not be ignored since it struck at the heart of their worldview at several points. Darwin's theory of origins demanded a response from Christians who up to that point had cornered the market for explaining origins. In addition, Darwin's theory questioned the Christian doctrine of the uniqueness and significance of humanity as created beings. Most

importantly, however, Evangelicals were forced to question the relationship of science and their brand of religion, which ultimately was a cognitive challenge that cut to the core of Evangelical authority structures. Until that point in time science had been hailed as a partner to conservative religion, especially as it was promoted by Bacon and Newton (Marsden 1980:213).

Evangelicals and the New Science

The Evangelical view of science was extremely positivistic in the 19th and early 20th century. They believed along with many others in the society that science held the key to unlocking the truths in the universe (Jordan 1982:79). Evangelicals functioned from a Newtonian view of the universe and thought of it as "clocklike" and "machinelike"; the universe operates according to laws that may be discovered if humans are but willing to carefully observe and record the facts. The *method* of observation was found in the work of Bacon; he did not accept things unless they were founded on "hard evidence" (Hovenkamp 1978:23). According to Hovenkamp the postulate underlying this point of view is "that knowledge about God and knowledge about the world are of the same kind, that in the prcess of investigating one a persos makes discoveries about the other" (Hovenkamp 1978:23). Obviously Darwin's work is a prima facie contradiction of that principle for it was in disagreement with a literal interpretation of Genesis. Evangelicals tied Biblical and scientific authority together first in order to refute the Enlightenment's reasoned critique of orthodoxy and then later to counter the science of Darwin and geologists. The method of Bacon as adapted by

nineteenth century Evangelicals was dependent on the philosophic system of Thomas Reid, Common Sense Realism.

Evangelicals based their view of science on Reid's Common Sense Realism, which argued that one can know only those things that can be percieved and speak about those things only that can be known (Hovenkamp 1978:52). Common Sense philosophy, in contrast to the philosophy of Descartes, Locke, and Kant, held that the immediate objects of our perceptions were not ideas but were actually the external objects themselves (Marsden 1980:113). Words must be "signs of things" or else they are meaningless (Hovenkamp 1978:52); in other words, for language to be meaningful it must refer to objects in the actual world. Knowledge is grounded in common sense (i.e., it is evident to all) and certain undeniable truths that result from the connection of experience to reality; doubting that connection is itself dubious from this point of view. The scientific project is to investigate and classify the facts of nature that are an objective and unchanging order (Marsden 1980:112), and in tandem with such a view of science is the idea that the Bible is a repository of facts on par with nature (Marsden 1980:213). The Bible therefore becomes a record of facts which reflect the facts in nature as well as facts about God. William Jennings Bryan put it well when he said, "True science is classified knowledge and nothing can be scientific unless it is true" (Marsden 1980:213). The Bible was viewed as a source of hard facts, the central truth. Consequently as scientific thinking began to conflict with the Evangelical reading of scripture, a response was necessary.

The "new" science was labelled non-science by Evangelical intellectuals. The science of Darwin was part of a "second scientific revolution...which substituted a world of process and change" for a lawful, eminently predictable world of Newton. Evangelicals correctly viewed the new science as undermining their basis of authority: the Bible (Jordon 1982:79). They critiqued the "new" science of Darwin as speculative and hypothetical thinking. True science rests on facts, while evolution was mere hypothesis; again in the words of Bryan, it "... is million of guesses strung together" (Marsden 1980:213). At bottom what offended Evangelicals was the exclusion of the supernatural in the science of Darwin and its proponents. The truest facts are found in the Bible and one must begin there in the quest to understand the world.

The 19th century was a time of philosophical and social critique of religion as well, and when these criticisms are placed in the context of rapid social transformation and combined with the advent of Darwin, it is not surprising that the then Evangelicals became Fundamentalists. In a Newtonian world it had still been possible to have science and God in the same system of thought, but Darwin's theory required theological acrobatics that many conservatice Evangelicals were unwilling to attempt. They were also hesitant to give up their "Baconian" model based in induction and commitment to observation for a seemingly abstract and speculative theory of orgins (Marsden 1980:215; Hunter 1983:35). As far as Evangelicals were concerned, Darwinism was a return to the sterile and abstract logical "guessing" of the Aristotelian schoolmen (Eiseley 1973:35; Marsden 1980:213). Logic, if it was not grounded in Scripture

could lead to all manner of speculation and conclusions as can be witnessed in the writing of Aristotle. They could see no empirical basis for Darwin's theory, especially since the Bible itself was a source of data. This point of view served Evangelicals well as an internal glue that helped hold the culture together and provide intellectual legitimation in a time of rapid intellectual change in the wider culture. Its weakness, however, was that Evangelicals never produced any science. Bacon's method was not a method of science at all but a symbolic structure used in a battle over metaphysical starting points and assumptions. Evangelicals deplored Enlightenment metaphysics not because they were true positivists but because the metaphysic of Enlightenment were anti-Christian.

Evangelicals and Biblical Authority

The authority of the Bible was questioned by the modern view of reality that saw perception as an interpretative process. From this point of view the claims of revelation become part of historical evolution and consequently the testimony of biblical witnesses becomes a subject of scientific methods as well. Grant Wacker has suggested that the historical-critical method was the dynamite that brought the nineteenth century walls of Evangelicalism tumbling down (Inskeep 1986). The historical-critical method assumes that events are products of human action, not divine. Hence explanations are sought without any recourse to the divine. History in the modern mind is viewed as process, and truth, rather than being fixed, is determined by social convention. Marsden points out that

> in contemporary view of history, moreover, historical knowledge itself is regarded not as the accumulation of fixed, documented 'facts' but rather as a dialogue between the evidence for an event and the present day interpretations (Marsden 1984:98).

This view is in contrast to Common Sense Realism which assumes that we know the *event* in history, not merely the *idea* of the event. Any tendency to speak of history in evolutionary terms was viewed as a threat to the authority of the Scriptures and was condemned as poisonous subjectivism. The job of science was the classification of *facts* all of which are available to the senses in verifiable, lawful relations (Marsden 1980:18-20, 215).

In large part the modernity that Evangelicals fought was a paradigm shift in science from Newton and Bacon to Darwin and, later, Einstein. On a broader plane they fought a general shift away from religion toward secular ideologies. Religious authority came under severe criticism as the basis for its discourse came under a new authority: scientific rationality. As I have pointed out, Evangelicals have attempted to construct their own structure of scientific rationality, one which has been characterized, by Marsden, as "early modern" rather than the usual label, "pre-modern" (Marsden 1984:98). While this intellectual construct has held back the waters of modernity to some degree, its overall success is questionable at best; the juggernaut of critical, skeptical discourse is difficult to resist especially when the process of modernity has been given impetus by Protestant culture. Protestants undermined the hierarchical and institutional authority of the Catholic Church, replacing it with the authority of "the Book". The Enlightenment continued the critique of hierarchical authority and expanded it to

the authority of the "book" as well. Criticism of the biblical text struck at the heart of Evangelical culture requiring a defense of the integrity of their worldview. The direction that scientific rationality took from the 1860s and on was perceived to be *anti-Evangelical* by Evangelicals and indeed it was to the extent that it provided permission to question all authority structures, including the basis of knowledge itself. The loss of science from their corner was devastating, but not fatal. Evangelical belief has proved to be remarkably resiliant and adaptable when questioned and when under attack.

The confrontation with modernity leaves two religious choices: (1) to accomodate religion to worldly circumstances, meeting changes with all available resources, or (2) to hold firm and insist that changes do not affect supernatural truths (Hammond 1985). Evangelicalism chose the latter path, although that path was by no means singular in direction. Evangelical culture is remarkably diverse; boundary maintenance means very different things for Separatist-Fundamentalists than for Establishment Evangelicals. The formation of the National Association of Evangelicals in the early 1940s is evidence of this; Evangelicals in this group were much more willing to cooperate with liberal elements in Protestantism, although without compromise of doctrinal content (Hunter 1983:41). The dilemma for Evangelicals in modern society is to participate without sacrificing their cultural identity; that is, those characteristics, values, and beliefs that provide its adherents with an orientation to the world. Evangelicals must compromise in an effort to be relevant in the modern world; that is, in order to attract the modern individual

Evangelicals must gear the message to the modern ear and yet retain the portion of the message that is *least* modern to remain Evangelical: the teaching of salvation by grace from a supernatural God and the news that salvation is revealed in the Bible accurately and factually. This provides adherents of the religion with a structure of authority and an interpretive basis for identity that is difficult to come by in the secular world. Maintaining identity is a central task for all social groups, whether they are large or small, and in the modern world the task is particularly difficult.

Religious subcultures face an especially difficult task in modern society where rationalization of values and thought tends to exclude the validity of religious language, except at the private level (Hunter 1983:12; Berger 1969; Mol 1976). And even at the private level the basis of Evangelical authority, the Word, is questioned internally as well as externally to the culture. Apart from the complex issues that the historical-critical method raises for Evangelical authority, the fact that Evangelicalism historically is grounded in a more or less personal interpretation of the Word inevitably lends itself to a crisis of authority. Fundamentalists have attempted to solve the problem by retaining hierarchical authority as much as possible, especially in the family context and using the patriarchal authority of the pastor and father to "lay down the law" in the realm of morals and Biblical interpretation. Sex roles are maintained in traditional form as are parent-child relations. Generally Evangelicals have attempted to deal with this challenge by reasserting the centrality of inerrancy as a watershed

issue. The middle 70s witnessed an explosion of apologetics for the necessity of holding a view of the Bible as inerrant lest its authority be 'lost' to liberalism (read modernity). For many Evangelicals rejecting inerrancy was and is equated with rejecting God as an authority and revealer of truth. Usually those who adopted this position held a view of truth that was related to the rationalistic side of the Enlightenment rather than the skeptical. Again the position is a logical extension of the Common Sense view of the Bible as a record book of facts; to admit to the possibility of error in any of the facts leads to the possibility that all may be in error and thus the authority of the text is undermined. Yet there is diversity within the Evangelical culture on this issue, as would be expected in a modern world which has embraced a critical and skeptical view of the supernatural and sees language as context-bound, determined by social structure. Given this it would be expected that a proportion of the Evangelical camp would reject inerrancy as *the* issue and seek a middle ground between conservative Evangelicals and Liberal Protestantism. Establishment Evangelicalism is split on this issue as well; many embrace inerrancy as the most important issue and many do not share that view rejecting it as a politically divisive issue. Establishment Evangelicals are a complex group due to the likelihood of higher education levels and their embeddedness in middle-class identity. This internal tension in Evangelicalism is evident in the resurgence of the 1970s.

Evangelicals and the Middle Class

The resurgence of Evangelicalism in the 1970s with its political interests came as a surprise to many observers. The vitality of Evangelicalism and other more marginal religious movements in the wake of the 1960s protest and and death of God theology caused many sociologists to continue to rethink the secularization thesis (Hammond: 1985). It seems that the predictions of the death of religion have been premature. Secular humanism was the new target. Evangelicals were dissatisfied with the development and direction of modern society, particularly with the liberalizing of values in the wider culture. Dissatisfaction with the wider society was not new; Evangelicals had been critiqueing and predicting the demise of the society given its path for decades. What was new was the ability to preach the particulars of their dissatisfaction in the mass media and the rise of their political importance due to their tremendous organizational strength (Miller 1984). Targets for the Evangelical cause were the liberal courts, public schools, colleges, the mass media, the welfare state, and the entertainment industry (Hammond 1985). These issues are cultural issues; that is, they have a moral dimension and the battle being waged from the Evangelical point of view is definitely for normative control of the situation. It is, in short, a battle over cultural authority.

Secular humanism is viewed an enemy of bourgeois culture which Evangelicals have legitimated in America. The values of hard work, thrift, and individual responsibility defended be Evangelical religion since the Puritan establishment in New England have been undermined by the devel-

opment of a consumer society which uses credit as a way of life (Bell 1978:21). Work is no longer tied to a transcendent ethic that emphasizes communal obligation; today (and for 65 years) one works to consume and establish a lifestyle which increases status. Evangelicals, by and large, participate in the culture of consumption, which erodes the boundaries of the subculture in countless ways no doubt, yet they long for a past time when the boundaries were more discernable and more in agreement with the values of their religion. Much of this concern has been translated into lifestyle politics which pits large numbers of Evangelicals against the secular humanists who argue that values are *only* situational. For the most part, however, Evangelicals do not view the lifestyle of material consumption as undermining their traditional basis of legitimation. Rather they consistently point to moral decay as the culprit. The enemies of the culture are those who relativize morality by denying the transcendent. Evangelical ideology rarely makes a connection between the structures of society and the moral fabric; in the Evangelical mind the strucural form of society should be is determined by the moral. Morality is a matter of individual decision and not determined by a web of structures. The moral change in society in the post-War years is not related to econmics at all; it is a matter of prophetic prediction that things will get worse in the 'end times'. The giving up of absolute values in the wider culture is a significant sign that those 'times' have come. Secularism surrounds the culture making reproduction an extremely precarious process. The boundaries have become porous the more closely Evangelicals move toward the most powerful elements of modernity: education, urban living, and industrial and post-industrial occupations.

Philip Hammond characterizes the reality of the situation correctly when he says, "it is one thing to give up the fight if one's enemies do not believe correctly, but it is another when they behave improperly" (Hammond 1985). Many Evangelicals were willing to walk away from the fight over denominational control in the early part of the century, but now, in an age of mass society, it has become more difficult for Evangelicals to maintain their tradition in the midst of modernity. This is brought about by the middle-class location of Establishment Evan gelicalism. The more middle-class the subculture becomes, the more difficult it is to hold on to the culturally distinct value of knowledge grounded in Biblical revelation that provides the foundation for Evangelicalism in America. The subculture risks being swallowed up by the culture at large, in spite of the resources spent on building parallel institutions of training and recreation to safeguard the tradition (Noll 1984:103-113).

Frequently now the faculty in Evangelical institutions are educated in large, secular, and prestigious universities for their doctorates. This development has lead to an erosion of the traditional anti-historical-critical view of the Bible (Noll 1984:107). This is indicative of the increasing role of higher education in the Evangelical subculture which follows necessarily from the increasing importance of education in the wider society. The consequence is that even if parents encourage their children to attend Evangelical institutions there is less assurance that they will be taught the traditional view of Biblical authority. In a study of Evangelical college students Hammond and Hunter con-

cluded that Evangelical higher education plays the role of loosening the bedrock of Evangelical ideology (Hammond and Hunter 1984:234). This follows from the general findings that education has a liberalizing effect and is inversely related to religious commitment (Hammond and Hunter 1984:233).

The inverse relationship of education and religion (i.e. traditional religion) is not surprising given the connection of education to modernization. Education intends to broaden horizons and create an awareness of the immense diversity in the world culturally and otherwise. Religion, on the other hand, intends to conserve tradition, celebrating the present via the memory of the past. Religion does not celebrate diversity. Education has become important in a world that has moved away from the rural-agricultural life of work to an urban-industrial enviroment of artficiality. This enormous change has altered the basis of solidarity (Durkheim 1933) and marginalized the role of religion forcing it to adapt to the modern emphasis on individual autonomy. Evangelicalism has had to respond to the "cult of the individual" (Durkheim 1933) characteristic of the culture of modernism by adapting to the development, since rejection is not an option. The dilemma for middle class Evangelicalism is that membership in the middle-class increasingly requires educational credentials, yet increased education can be expected to undermine the authority of religion. Education has become a necessary element in gaining entry to the middle class and establishing status. Consequently, education plays a major role in constructing the modern basis for legitimation. That is, the legitimations offered via

secular education and those offered by Evangelical religion remain in conflict. The technical-rational values of the middle class does not leave much time or have much need for religious ideas such as revelation, sin, and the supernatural. Evangelicals must continually search for ways to accommodate middle-class values of rationality without "giving away the store". It is a thin tightwire to walk; the overwhelming pressure is to reduce religion to a private set of ethics and downplay the supernatural and the symbolic (Giddens 1971:183).

There is evidence that this is indeed happening in Evangelical culture. Evangelicals have never been particularly shy about using the most rational means available for communicating their message. This is a tradition grounded in the Reformation, which probably would not have gotten off the ground without the use of mass printing. It is also true of American revivalists from Finney to Graham; they leave no stone unturned in using all the technical means available to gain the result: conversion. Conversion becomes a rationalized set of 'simple' steps to be followed. So, on the one hand, the culture is distinctly modern in that they are masters of the modern techniques of persuasion, while at the same time they seek alternative explanations to some modern sciences most significant conclusions (Marsden 1984:98). They are willing to use every means available to "further the cause of Christ" and so they accommodate the message to the medium of television willingly reducing it to formulii of steps, laws, codes, and guidelines (Hunter 1983:75). Protestants have tended to rationalize spirituality all along, but "what is different about contemporary American Evangelicalism is the intensi-

fication of this propensity to unprecedented proportions" (Hunter 1984:74). The cookbook approach to salvation in evidence of the influence of modernity as is the willingness to make use of the most rational means available for communicating the message.

Along with the reduction of the Gospel message to easily digested packages for mass consumption comes a de-emphasis on the "difficult" teachings such as innate depravity, the jealous God of wrath, and the damnation of hell. In their place is an accent on the positve shrouded in the language of modern mental health. Evangelicals are caught in the same thicket of plurality and deinstitutionalization as other middle-class people and find themselves asking the same question: Who am I? (Hunter 1983:91-94). They are encouraged by their leaders and the books they read to probe their self and learn to know their feelings and achieve emotional maturity (Hunter 1983:94). Evangelicals are rapidly developing a cadre of experts trained in psychology to deal with the demand for help with personal problems of development and with crisis intervention. Evangelical seminaries place a strong emphasis on the techniques of psychological counseling; pastors have at least a minimum of expertise when they enter the ministry and they are likely to establish contacts with experts for referral purposes. Reliance on psychological principles is not without benefit obviously but it tends to turn Evangelicals further away from an other-worldly orientation toward a this-worldly one; the same may be said of the formulas used for conversion, spirituality, and church growth and management. Establishment Evangelical religion is being transformed by society and its secular

orientation; this cannot be doubted. The social structure of modern society requires a taming of Fundamentalist religion, and Establishment Evangelicals have agreed to this transformation within certain limits, but it is an open question as to how much they can hold the line.

The developing Evangelical left has accepted portions of modern intellectual thinking that conservative Evangelicals have identified as the most potentially poisonous. New Evangelicals are firm in their acceptance of the principle of historical criticism; they acknowledge the tension that the Bible is without a doubt the word of man while also affirming the faith-belief that it is also the Word of God (Quebedeax 1974:37). New Evangelicals are more likely to be motivated by social concerns that are left-leaning than are other segments of Evangelicals. Many of these younger generation Evangelicals have been influenced by the social unrest of the 60s. New Evangelicals critique society at the social-structural level in contrast to the individual-moral level of criticism that characterizes Fundamentalists and Establishment Evangelicals. New Evangelicals seek to reverse the standard conservative assault on the Social Gospel and their characteristic bifurcation of individual sin from social sin and individual salvation from social reformation. Conversion must still precede social transformation but individual conversion is not enough, society must be transformed.

New Evangelicals are distinctly modern in their acceptance of the historical method and their willingness to think beyond individual reality and to use abstract categories such as "social-structure". Unlike other segments of Evangelicals, however, they are more likely to be sus-

picious of the rational, utilitarian values of the technological society and the uncritical use of of the media for "spreading the Word". These attitudes could be viewed as pre-modern. They are also more likely to be suspicious of money and reject the standard middle-class evangelical justification of its use as long as one maintains the "correct attitude" toward it. New Evangelicals reject bourgeois material values and the staus quo attitudes that prosperity brings. In their view having a correct attitude toward money is merely a way to justify the standard social uses and meanings of money which they believe is in fundamental contradiction with the Biblical message. New Evangelicals see faith and society in conflict and in need of transformation; they criticize other Evangelicals for their broad acceptance of current social forms and culture, thus allowing their religious values to function as a legitimation of the social economy (Quebedeax 1974:38-39; Hunter 1983:109).

In essence, the New Evangelicals are those whose bedrock has been loosened by modern intellectual currents of historical-criticism and yet struggle to maintain an orthodox relation to Biblical authority. Their acceptance of historical-criticism changes the way in which the Bible is authoritative; it is much less a provider of rules and boundaries and much more a resevoir of stories of prophetic action that will inform one's own action in world. The Bible is not a recipe book for personal living so much as it is a record of God's activity in human history whereby its stories *become* revelatory by the power of the Holy Spirit. New Evangelicals do not hold with the picture theory of language which postulates that language has a one to one correspondence with reality.

They hold a modern view believing that language is a personal and social form and the understanding of reality is an interpretive process grounded in social definitions. Hence, reality is viewed from a pre-eminently modern perspective: relativity. Relativity for the New Evangelical, however, does not mean random flux since the ultimate actor-interpreter is God, who has intervened and will intervene in history. Their conception of revelation is very different from conservative Evangelicalism; for New Evangelicals revelation is that which judges the existing order and calls the individual to a position of self and social critique as well. It is never limited to personal conversion and individual spirituality; the spiritual and the material are spheres that overlap and must be dealt with as such, in the view of New Evangelicals. The New Evangelical outlook on life, especially their view of language and the authority of the Bible, is much more critical than that of other Evangelical segments; they are much more compatible with what Gouldner has called the "culture of critical discourse" (Gouldner 1979).

Evangelicals and Authority

Authority in Evangelical culture is tied to tradition and modernity. The culture is tied to modernity because it is a subculture in a society at the forefront of modernization and these developments require adaptation in the social world. It is a culture based in language; the Word is the authority in Evangelical life. It is also modern because the Word is interpreted not by the Church *for* the individual but by the individual. Salvation is an individual not a corporate matter. There are no official mediating institutions or sacraments which channel grace

to the individual. The individual must become an expert in his/her faith; it is the priesthood of all believers, not a hierarchy of priests. Based on this, it would be expected that Evangelical religion could adapt well in a world where religion was privatized and individual autonomy is emphasized. Indeed, Evangelical religion has thrived but not without transformation.

Evangelical culture clings to tradition. The Evangelical view of language is decidedly early modern in that the interpreter is only reluctantly acknowledged due to fear of the implications of relativity. They fear that, if it is admitted that Biblical passages may have more than one meaning or that their meaning is tied to an interpreter, it will lose all meaning and consequently will lose all its authority. Establishment Evangelicals and Fundamentalists critique the New Evangelical movement on this point, warning them of their 'liberal' mistake in more readily accepting the historical-critical critique of the Bible. If the Biblical content is questioned, Evangelicals feel they have lost their cultural blueprint providing direction and meaning. If the Words of the Bible are not "trustworthy" then there is little that can be counted on in this rapidly changing world. The absolutization of values depends, in the Establishment Evangelical mind, on the absolute inerrancy of the Biblical text. Evangelicals often quote the verse in the book of Hebrews: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever"; it provides an anchor in a time of rapid change.

The anchor is being challenged by the increasing importance of higher education, which in turn leads to questioning authority whether the

institution is sacred or secular and assumes all values to be relative. Modern higher education tends to undermine all authority structures, especially the sacred, and seeks to surround conflict with the rational discourse of problem solving. Religious legitimation introduces the dimension of the transcendent and anchors the present interpretation of events in the collective memory of the past. Consequently, while Evangelicals are modern in that they emphasize the individual and play down the authority of the institutional church, they are traditional because they believe values are absolute and anchored in the revelation found in the Bible. Values are not "discovered" or "clarified" through exercises offered in the public schools; they are revealed, absolute, and made available by reading the Bible. Yet the anchor is also challenged by the Evangelical tendency to reduce the Word to simple formula and rules. This Evangelical habit may be its most modern cultural characteristic and ultimately could lead to the undermining of authority from within. The Evangelical "customer" can shop for the same package from the psychologist or any number of other secular meaning systems without the trappings of professed belief in the supernatural as presented in Evangelical religion.

CHAPTER IV

THE NEW CLASS AND EVANGELICALISM: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The interplay between tradition and modernity is a phenomenon that is difficult to describe. Both concepts are ideal types that connect with concrete reality only in more or less ambiguous ways. The observer of modern society must constantly be aware of the interplay at various levels of the traditional and the modern. The case of the NC and Evangelicalism is no different. Evangelicalism is shot through with elements of both in the struggle to maintain existence in a hostile enviroment. The NC on the other hand has been presented as the cutting edge of modernity due its embededness in the system of higher education and its commitment to critical discourse. While there are elements of tradition to be found in the culture, on the whole it is presented in the literature as a force that pushes the tide of modernity forward. In this chapter I will pull together the similarities and differences between the NC and Evangelical culture and suggest possibilities for the future.

A Brief Summary

In the first chapter I argued that religion in modern society has both declined and persisted. The traditions of Western Christianity persist in modern society, though in a radically different form and position when compared to the domination of the Medieval Church. The

Western Christian churches are in a competitive market among themselves and externally with secular meaning systems. I concluded in the chapter that the most important sociological concept for understanding secularization is rationalization. The increased emphasis on efficiency, utility, and maximization and the concommitant growth of bureaucratic organization undermines the "...credibility of a religious orientation and thus contributes to what has been called the 'disenchantment of the world'" (Hunter 1983:12). In the modern situation of cultural pluralism the individual is pushed to the forefront and forced to choose from among alternative "systems" of legitimation. Religion, which is steeped in tradition, myth, authority, and the sacred, is radically challenged by the naturalistic assumptions of science and the attendant growth of technology and must adapt or withdraw from the larger society.

Sociological writings on the NC describe the class as pushing the tide of modernity forward. I have not attempted to prove the existence of t he NC, but rather have used the descriptions found in the literature to construct an ideal type of secularity with which to compare Evangelical culture. The NC is secular, as I argued in chapter two, in that it rejects tradition and traditional authority. The NC is found in the center of modernity because the basis for its members' survival is winning credentials through higher education. They carry on the development of rationalization in the modern world. They *live* the languages of scientific and technical rationality; the fundamental characteristic of this language is the propensity to relativize all authority and knowledge structures. The culture of critical discourse provides its

members with a speech code placing the self at the focus of the meaning structure. The individual must persuade himself/herself through logical and evidential argument of the truth; determining truth *cannot* depend on the authority of office or any tradition. The scientific method is the standard by which all knowledge is judged, but it is the individual who must apply the method properly and live with the consequences of its naturalistic metaphysic.

Evangelicals, who attempt to carry forth the tradition of Western Christianity, are caught in the bind of modernity, which holds scientific rationality as its standard of truth. It has become less plausible to adhere to supernatural legitimations in a world of pluralism and scientific naturalism. The Evangelical worldview has come under attack; their basis of authority, the Bible, has been undermined by the historical-critical method and the modern view of language, which is much less sure of the connection between the individual and reality. The increasing importance of higher education in the society is a significant push in the direction of secularization; as Evangelicals become more educated they move into the arena of modernity much more intensely. They have little choice in this matter if they wish to become or remain a member of the middle class. With higher education more likely Evangelical children will be exposed to the culture of critical discourse in an environment not controlled by the parents or the church. This holds true whether the child attends a church- sponsored school or not, though the church schools do provide some shelter (clearly some are much more strict than others and even monitor classroom teaching). Again, the

choice confronting Evangelicals is to adapt to modernity and meet the challenge with all available resources or hold firm and insist that changes do not affect supernatural truths.

Evangelicalism, as we have seen, holds within its sacred canopy a range of adaptive responses to modernity. The Fundamentalist response is to hold firm by reaffirming hierarchical authority in family and church life and maintaining rigid boundaries between their group and the "world" by establishing strict codes of behavior. Establishment Evangelicals, on the other hand, are more willing to compromise and to adapt the "form" of the Gospel making it relevant to middle-class America because many of them are solidly middle-class. Authority in this sector of the culture is more likely to resemble the middle-class ideology of the autonomous self. New Evangelicals are a product of the tremendous change in the '60s socially and culturally. They have more in common with the secular intellectuals of the NC than with their Fundamentalist brothers and sisters; they are left leaning in their political views and read the Bible as a text that prophetically critiques the social structutes of ancient Israel. In their view the contemporary Christian should do likewise. The theme that unifies the culture is individualism, except among the relatively small proportion of New Evangelicals, who are likely to have a much more collectivist orientation and speak about the desireability of community.

The individualism of Evangelicals is deeply rooted in the American notion that the individual is above the group and that, in the final analysis, the group exists to facilitate the goals of the individual.

Mobility, status, and success depend on career, and the individual is responsible for "making it happen". Middle-class ideology permeates Evangelical culture. The most interesting sociological issue, given the strength of Evangelical presence in American culture in the latter part of the 20th century, is the interplay between tradition and modernity on the issue of individualism.

Individualism and Middle-Class Cosmology

The work of Mary Douglas is helpful in understanding the complex interrelation between tradition and modernity and social structure and the symbolic forms of culture (Douglas 1966). Her extensive knowledge of ethnographic literature allows her to formulate a typology which relates social structure to cosmology cross culturally and that is a valuable tool in the attempt to "see" the intersection of tradition and modernity. Douglas argues that as social stucture loses its grip and as geographic and social mobility increase, the individual becomes more highly valued and speech becomes more elaborated (Douglas 1966:30-31).

Douglas' theoretical construct is an attempt to make sense of mainstream sociology's concern with modernization and the change from traditional to modern society. The rise of the discipline of sociology itself is reflective of the increasing importance of theoretical language and the individual. As speech codes become more elaborated, that is, more abstract and technical, ritualism declines and the idea of God becomes more intimate (Douglas 1966:36). In this situation there is less need for the ritualism of condensed symbols and a high demand for

explicit symbols with a single meaning. The social order demands symbols of efficiency since efficiency is the highest value; ritualistic religion is no longer desirable.

The individual of modern society is the center of attention in the sense that "all" depends on personal success in both the public realm of work and the private realm of family and religion. The individual is responsible for control and management of his or her environment which leads to success or failure. The individual must exert mastery over the concrete situations and processes of life in order to gain status and achieve. Given this requirement of the individual, the dominance of therapeutic ideology among the middle class is not a mystery. The pressure of day to day living requires a symbolic system that helps make sense of the world. Therapy teaches an individual how to be individualistic.

The demand for explicit, straightforward symbols carries over into the religious realm as well. The individual has become more significant in modern society and this leads to an image of God that is more intimate and personal. God is less a judge and more a personal friend who acts according to the rules of the game and is therefore predictable. Individuals percieve themselves as in "charge of their own piece of the cosmos, their own lives, and their overall destinies. Any gods or God who enter the picture are always subservient to the individual, a junior partner in the process of life." (Malina 1986:49). God is much like a celestial gumball machine, subservient to the commands and needs of the individual. God is civilized, sin is reduced to wrong attitudes and the

individual is left with a search for a purely ethical religion, that is, one which will provide a blueprint for action and thus contribute to a sense of self-justification (Douglas 1966:36). Nevertheless religion is important in American society, even though it is private and secondary, because of the fragile position of the individual who may from moment to moment find his/her life in crisis with little support available.

Evangelicals and Accommodation to Modernity

Establishment Evangelicals fit Douglas' typlogy of modern cosmology very well. The religion of Evangelicals has progressively emphasized the immanence of God over transcendence. The hymnology of Evangelicalism is filled with images of Jesus the friend, personal guide, and problem solver. Evangelicals emphasize the *personal* nature of their religion above all else; the claim is that God will change your life completely and instantaneously. The God of most Evangelicals is not the God of Calvin who caused believers to tremble. The God of the Calvinist forced the rationalization of behavior and contributed to the development of bourgeois values such as thrift, acquisitiveness, and hard work. As modernization has developed further, Evangelicals have found it difficult to resist pressure to rationalize the *cognitive* aspects of their worldview. Conversion becomes a matter to be addressed in the most efficient manner possible. This tendency manifests itself in the growing media industry in Evangelicalism, the emphasis on "how to" literature, and the reduction of the Gospel to easily understood "rules", "principles", and "codes". The reduction of Biblical material to simple steps and formulas reflects the value our society places on knowledge

that can be applied. If knowledge is not deemed to be appplicable and useful, then it is thought to be irrelevant and a waste of time.

Cognitive rationalization is also evident among "intellectual" Evangelicals who make apologetics the centerpiece of the faith. These Evangelicals have taken it upon themselves to justify the faith through the use of reason. This development is to be expected in a subculture that finds itself surrounded by a secular society which places much of its hope for the future in technical and scientific rationality. The predominance of the CCD requires that faith be justified theoretically and in a way that meets the challenge of secular humanism head on. This is problematic for Evangelicals in that there are limits to the degree of cognitive rationalization the culture can absorb and remain evangelical, especially if cognitive rationalization refers to *critical* thinking, which yields no quarter in regard to questions raised (Gouldner 1976:98). Obviously, Evangelical culture has not been known to embrace complete openness to intellectual inquiry. In fact the stereotype is quite the opposite (Hofstadter 1962). And while this is changing, the most easily identified form of rationalization within Evangelical culture is the rejection of the other-worldly religion in favor of the pragmatic rationalism of salvation formulas, self-help books, and media evangelism.

Evangelicals and the New Class: Final Comparisons

The relationship of the NC and Evangelicalism is a simple one at one level and complex at another. If one merely looks at the broad changes

in Western society over the past two centuries, clearly the NC is the enemy of evangelical culture. Evangelicals have the audacity to believe in the supernatural while the NC are the focus of secular humanism. Evangelicals attempt to order their lives according to the "will of God" and seek his prayerful advice in and through the Bible. The NC on the other hand are not likely to take the supernatural very seriously; they seek seek scientific answers to their problems, not supernatural solutions. Evangelicals believe in absolutes in the area of morality and strongly reject the modern embrace of relativity, which effectively reduces morality to passing cultural forms and individual preference. For the NC, the only thing that is taboo is taboo itself. The most significant difference between the two cultures is their base of knowledge: Evangelicals believe in revelation while the NC base for knowledge is reason, the scientific method and the self.

This contrast holds at an abstract level but it is in fact much more complex. American Evangelicals combine elements of tradition with distinctly modern ones. On the one hand, they hold a supernatural view of the world complete with moral absolutes, while on the other, they willingly codify the message of the Gospel for conversion and standardize spirituality for personal growth (Hunter 1983:74). Rules of "how to" for everything have exploded from Evangelical publishing houses; there are guides available for success in areas ranging from prayer to sex life. Life is distilled to its simple essence for application. This adaptation to modern rationality has occurred in unprecedented proportion in the past twenty years or so. Hunter argues that "Conservative

protestantism as a whole has been slow, even reluctant, to accommodate to the pressure to rationalize its worldview" and this was the case with American Evangelicals (Hunter 1983:74). With the inception of the NAE, however, the rationalization of their worldview began in earnest as the leading thinkers of Establishment Evangelicals attempted to construct a plausible apologetic based on reason (Hunter 1983:74). Much of the effort was intended to conteract secular humanism and its eroding effect on Evangelical values and beliefs. The effort to counteract secular humanism at the intellectual level brings Evangelicals to a dangerous point, since the process of countering the alien worldview requires that they come in contact with secular knowledge and consequently risk "going native". This process is not surprising given the stated committment of Establishment Evangelicals to the wider culture; it necessitates a degree of accommodation that Fundamentalists have been unwilling to give in to in any planned way.

The individual is of central importance to both the NC and Evangelical culture. The NC is the secularized version of individuality that was pushed to the forefront of Western culture by the Reformers and those who followed. For Evangelicals there are no mediating institutions betwen the individual and God; the sacraments are reduced to a symbolic memorial rather than the faith miracle of the liturgical churches. The individual gains status by claiming to have a "knowledge of Jesus Christ". This knowledge is precarious given its individual nature, hence, the necessity of surrounding it first with clear instructions on how to gain the knowledge; second, how to maintain a clear grip

on it; and third, how to defend it, if need be, against secular humanism. The "methodism" of Evangelical faith is analogous to the methodism of modern scientific rationality. Both attempt to isolate a particular kind of knowledge in a way that can be verified and submitted as a truth claim. They are, however, very different in their starting point: the Evangelical claim to knowledge has a supernatural reference while the claims of scientific rationality begin with the assumption that events are natural and therefore understandable given the proper method and application. In both cases, the learning and application of the knowledge occurs within a community of individuals rather than a traditional collectivity where public and private life are interwoven. Private knowledge that cannot be communicated across traditional boundaries of community, family, and status structures is not very useful in the modern world. The codification of knowledge has been an extremely important development in society and Evangelical culture certainly reflects the move toward codification. It allows knowledge to be publicaly recognized and given credence (credential). Modern mass society demands codified language forms to support technological and industrial advancement. The individual must become a specialist in some form of knowledge in order to secure an income to live and this nearly always involves formal schooling of some kind. The professionalization of Evangelical leadership positions is a reflection of developments in the wider society as is the reduction of the message to a technical formula.

An additional similarity, which is related to individual autonomy, is that both cultural authority structures are voluntary. Persuasion plays

a key role in both, however, the basis of persuasion is very different. In the NC culture of critical discourse the listener must be persuaded by the knowledge claims of others on the basis of *reasons*. The knowledge claims cannot be based on status claims; on the contrary the point must be argued according to agreed rules. In much the same way entrance to Evangelical culture is voluntary and is accomplished by persuasion but the persuasion is rarely based on reasoned argument; and when it is, rarely does it persuade. The persuasion of traditional revival Evangelicalism appeals to *emotion* more than reason; it tugs at the heart, not the mind. The production of reasoned arguments in the plethora of books on apologetics is more for bolstering *internal* security in the face of secular humanism's attack than it is to convert the secularist to the faith. The Evangelical obsession with apologetics does signal an important shift in the culture. In effect they have agreed to play their game of religion in the enemy's court by placing such a great emphasis on the reasonableness of Christian faith. The basis of authority becomes not simply the Word but the reasonablness of the Word. This opens the way to further rationalization since reason is the fundamental guide for secular ideology.

The fundamental difference between the cultures of the NC and Evangelicals is the roles their respective systems of knowledge play in the society. Evangelical knowledge is marginal to the operation of the society on a daily basis, except the extent to which it is part of civil religion. NC knowledge, on the other hand, is necessary to the continuing development of society; the expert knowledge of the intelligentsia,

for instance, pushes the revolution of the forces of production forward and provides information necssary to run the state bureaucracy. The intellectuals of the NC contribute to the production and reproduction of secular culture largely in the form of scientific rationality. Evangelicals have fought the marginalization of their knowledge base by rationalizing it in an attempt to make it palpable to the modern individual, but in doing so they have played the hand dealt to them by modernity. The religion has been forced to function at a private, individual level until the past few years when Evangelicals have attempted to reestablish a political agenda. Even here, the agenda is wrapped in an individualistic, moral ideology and has little prospect of success, except as a "caboose" to secular conservative groups.

In conclusion, because Evangelical culture is and has been so closely tied to American culture in general, changes in the wider society ultimately force transformation in the subculture. In the case of the NC, we have argued for a connection between cultural ideology, education, and occupation, albeit in a broad sense. To the extent that Evangelicals have become more educated and move into these occupations, requiring educational credentials, it would be expected that conflict would be generated between the respective value systems, both internal and external to Evangelicalism. There is evidence that this is indeed the case. Internally, the development of the New Evangelicals is the most obvious internal link to the NC. Their positions on a variety of issues, both Biblical and political, have generated internal conflict. Externally the so-called resurgence of conservative Evangelicalism is grounded in

large measure in a reaction to secular humanism, which they see as a threat to their worldview. The protest may be fruitfully viewed as a reaction to the continuing erosion of the subculture's ability to maintain the plausibility of their cultural system, which is grounded ultimately in the Bible and American Democratic capitalism.

In an age of mass communication, education, transportation and media, Evangelicals find it nearly impossible to maintain moral purity or even the illusion of it. In the post-War years change has become more rapid and more enveloping making it difficult for religious subcultures to integrate the change in such a way that maintains control. The modern situation is better viewed as one in which religion is integrated by and in society and, hence, marginalized as a meaningful force. This idea follows the thought of Weber who predicted that capitalist society would soon do away with its need for the legitimating ideology of religion. The utilitarian nature of technical-rational values have become part of Evangelical religion; in this way the religion can survive in the modern world and even flourish for a time. But the path set before Evangelical religion is continued disenchantment of the authority upon which the religion is based, that is, given the economic and educational development of the society as a whole. The middle-class position of Establishment Evangelicalism places the culture in the path of secularization. As the culture becomes more educated, it becomes very difficult to maintain orthodoxy; education challenges students to reconsider the basis of authority and force them to make a choice for the old, the new or some combination. Thus tradition is no longer handed down but must be *cho-*

sen from among other possibilities. In this situation Evangelicalism may not disappear but it will certainly be transformed.

Research Notes for the Future

The problem for the future is to understand more fully and concretely the interaction of tradition and modernity in the case of Evangelicalism. While there is a growing body of survey literature addressed to the description and explanation of the movement, there has been little work on Evangelical culture using qualitative methods. I suggest that an adequate understanding of the culture requires that research be done from the *inside*. The beliefs and attitudes of Evangelicals need to be described in *their* context to be understood more fully. In addition the beliefs and attitudes need to be described by the persons who hold them and this requires more than survey analysis can provide.

This thesis suggests that Evangelicals are deeply influenced by modernity in the way they formulate and legitimate their worldview. And yet, they hold fast to tradition in ways many trained social thinkers thought would die out long before now. The task for the social researcher interested in Evangelicalism is to reveal the intersection between modernity and Evangelical religion. The comparison of the NC with Evangelicalism suggests many possibilities. For instance, one might identify a set of occupations as part of the NC and interview Evangelicals who hold these occupations. What negotiations in ideology occur? How do individuals who are committed to scientific rationality in the marketplace and to the "Holy One of Israel" bring those two

worlds together? Does the kind of Evangelicalism that appeals to middle-class, suburban professionals have to be "civilized", limiting religion to a set of norms and values that enhances life at work without creating conflict? What happens to religion at the level of subjective consciousness?

A second, and related, research issue which arises in this paper is the role and influence of higher education. As Evangelicals become more educated, they move closer to modernity because education and its institutions promote change, and pluralism, and have been the centers for the critique of religion. Educational credentials are required in modern society to remain or become part of the middle class, and Evangelicals show no sign of excluding themselves (or their children) from the middle class. Yet, they must maintain a view of the cosmos grounded in the supernatural. As Evangelicals move closer to the nexus of modernity through higher education and are more firmly attached to modern middle-class culture, I expect that change to be reflected in the structures of legitimation. The hypothesis is that God has been domestcated in the minds of Evangelicals. This is best learned and "tested" by talking with Evangelicals who *live in the intersection*, rather than depending on survey analysis.

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APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by David G. Sheagley has been read and approved by the following committee:

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the thesis is now given final approval by the committee with reference to content and form.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Dec. 3, 1986
Date

Ross P. Scherer
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